CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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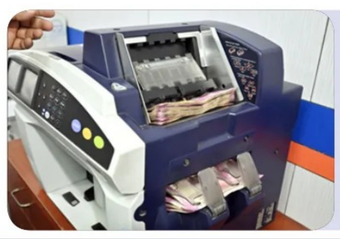

States likely to raise up to Rs 14 lakh cr in FY27: ICRA P11

Padikkal credits mindset shift for white-ball success with RCB P12

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IRAN'S TOP TECH VARSITY BOMBED

34 killed as US-Israel jets bomb military and AI infra, and residential areas across Tehran | Iran says it will respond 'in kind' to any attacks, warns Trump threats an 'incitement to war crimes'; In response, Trump says striking Iran infra wouldn't be war crimes as "they're animals"

TEHRAN

At least 34 people have been killed, including six children, as the US and Israel carried out massive attacks across Iran, targeting a top university as well as residential areas, after US President Donald Trump set a Tuesday deadline for Tehran to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face strikes on its power plants and bridges.

As per reports, an air attack killed 23 people, including four girls and two boys aged below 10 years, in Tehran province's Baharestan County.

At least five people were killed in an attack on a residential building in the city of Qom, according to the political and security deputy of the governor, Morteza Heydari. Six others were killed in Bandar-e Lengeh, in southern Iran, authorities said.

At least a dozen cities were hit across Iran, including Bandar Abbas, Ahvaz, Mahshahr, Shiraz, Isfahan and Karaj.

US-Israeli strikes also hit Sharif University in Tehran, one of Iran's leading scientific universities, often compared with the US's Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

"The Sharif area has witnessed other attacks, including one on a gas facility," reports say. Other civil facilities, including roads, power plants and bridges were also targeted across Iran, it added.

"Iran's Ministry of Science and Technology told us that at least 30 universities have been hit" since the beginning of the war on February 28."

'They hit Iran's MIT': Tehran vows to retaliate

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Monday accused Israeli-US forces of attacking Sharif University in Tehran, which is also known as the MIT of Iran, saying the site was attacked following previous strikes on other educational institutes. "Israeli-US aggressors have bombed the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Iran," he posted on X, along with photos of destruction at the university. "Aggressors will witness our might." Araghchi invoked Prophet Muhammad, emphasising Iranian society's quest for knowledge: "1,400 years ago, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said that even if knowledge was situated in the distant Pleiades, Iranians would be capable of attaining it."

ISRAEL ATTACKS IRAN'S SOUTH PARS GAS FIELD AGAIN

TEHRAN

Israel struck a key petrochemical plant at Iran's massive South Pars natural gas field and killed two paramilitary Revolutionary Guard commanders on Monday, potentially challenging a new 45-day ceasefire proposal for Tehran and the United States as President Donald Trump's ultimatum looms within hours.

The gas field attack was aimed at eliminating a major source of revenue for Iran, Israel said. The field is critical to Iran's electricity production, but the strike appeared to be separate from Trump's threats to target power plants and bridges if Tehran doesn't reopen

the Strait of Hormuz to all shipping traffic. Iran's grip on the strait has caused oil prices to surge and shaken the world economy.

Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz described "a powerful strike on the largest petrochemical facility in Iran." The gas field shared with Qatar is the world's largest and sits under the Persian Gulf. Iranian state media confirmed the attack and blamed the US and Israel.

'Trump yet to approve draft deal'

The White House said Trump has yet to approve any draft deal to end fighting, following media reports on a possible ceasefire proposal. A 45-day ceasefire is "one of many ideas, and POTUS (Trump) has not signed off on it," a White House official told AFP, ahead of a press conference by Trump at 1700 GMT at which he is due to address the conflict. Trump had given Iran until 0000 GMT Wednesday to open the Hormuz, a waterway that is crucial to global oil and gas flows, or else face strikes on bridges and power plants.

IRAN REJECTS LATEST CEASEFIRE PROPOSAL AS TRUMP DEADLINE APPROACHES

TEHRAN

Iran on Monday rejected the latest ceasefire proposal and instead said it wants a permanent end to the war, even as US President Donald Trump's ultimatum loomed for progress to avoid a major escalation in attacks against power plants and bridges. Tehran termed it "extremely ambitious", "unusual" and "illogical". "The US 15-point proposal is excessively demanding. We have compiled and formalised our own set of demands," it stated. "We won't merely accept a ceasefire," Mojtaba Ferdousi Pour, head of the Iranian diplomatic mission in Cairo, said. "We only accept an end of the war with guarantees that we won't be attacked again." Iran's state-run IRNA news agency said Tehran had conveyed its response through Pakistan, a key mediator. Trump's deadline centers on Tehran opening the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil is shipped in peacetime. Ferdousi Pour said Iranian and Omani officials were working on a mechanism for administrating the shipping chokepoint.

IRGC intel chief killed in US-Israeli strike

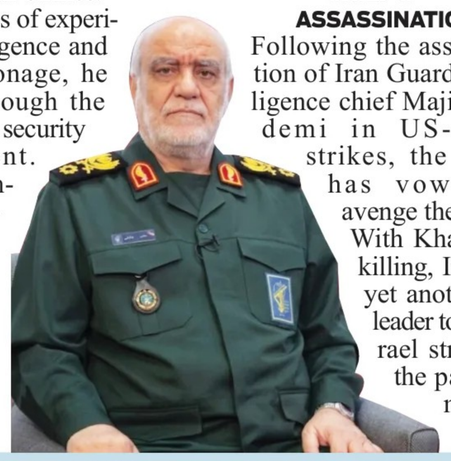
TEHRAN

The head of the intelligence wing of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Majid Khademi, was killed in what Iranian state media on Monday described as a "terrorist attack" by the "American-Zionist (Israeli) enemy."

Khademi, who took charge in 2025 after his predecessor was killed in an Israeli strike, is the latest senior figure to die in US-Israeli air strikes.

With decades of experience in intelligence and counter-espionage, he had risen through the ranks of Iran's security establishment. Before becoming intelligence chief, he led the Guards' Intelligence Protection Organisation, responsible for internal surveillance and counter-intelligence, and also served in senior roles within Iran's defence ministry.

The IRGC's intelligence arm is considered one of the country's most powerful security bodies, playing a central role in monitoring domestic activity and countering foreign influence, often functioning alongside the civilian intelligence ministry.



IRGC VOWS TO REVENGE SPY CHIEF'S ASSASSINATION

Following the assassination of Iran Guards intelligence chief Majid Khademi in US-Israel strikes, the IRGC has vowed to avenge the killing. With Khademi's killing, Iran lost yet another top leader to US-Israel strikes in the past one month.

11 key Iranian figures eliminated

US-Israeli strikes on Iran have killed several senior political and military figures, hitting the Islamic Republic's core leadership as the regional war disrupts energy markets and global shipping.

AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI
Supreme Leader of Iran - killed on Feb 28

- **Ali Shamkhani** Close adviser to Khamenei- Feb 28
- **Mohammad Pakpour** IRGC Commander-in-chief - Feb 28
- **Aziz Nasirzadeh** Iran Defence Minister - Feb 28
- **Abdolrahim Mousavi** Chief of staff of Iran's armed forces - Feb 28
- **Ali Larijani** Supreme National Security Council secretary - March 17
- **Gholamreza Soleimani** Iran's Basij Paramilitary Force Commander - March 17
- **Esmail Khatib** Iran Intelligence Minister - killed on March 18
- **Behnam Rezaei** IRGC navy intelligence chief - March 26
- **Alireza Tangsiri** IRGC navy commander - March 26
- **Majid Khademi** IRGC intelligence head - April 6

SHORTS FROM WAR FRONT

- Israel strikes aircraft, helicopters, and other military infrastructure at 3 airports across Tehran
- Iran reviewing peace proposal but won't reopen Hormuz for 'temporary ceasefire': Report
- Iran, US receive framework by Pakistan to end hostilities, immediate ceasefire: Reports
- Strikes near Iran nuclear power plant and surrounding areas 'must stop': IAEA

Indian Navy escorts 9th LPG tanker via Hormuz under 'Op Urja Suraksha'

NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy on Monday escorted the LPG carrier Green Asha through the Strait of Hormuz as part of its ongoing maritime security mission, Operation Urja Suraksha.

This marks the ninth such escorted vessel amid heightened tensions in the region, with the tanker expected to reach India within 24 to 36 hours. The move follows the successful transit of another LPG carrier, Greensanvi, which is carrying over 46,000 metric tonnes of fuel and is set to dock at Dahej in Gujarat.

Officials said another vessel, Jag Vikram, is currently awaiting clearance for safe passage, indicating continued naval coordination in the strategically vital corridor.

The operation is being closely monitored by the Defence Ministry, with a focus on ensuring uninterrupted energy supplies. Authorities believe the steady arrival of LPG shipments will help stabilise domestic supply, which had recently been hit by shortages, hoarding and black marketing.

The mission underscores India's proactive approach to safeguarding its energy lifelines, with naval task forces deployed in the Persian Gulf to escort Indian-flagged vessels through sensitive zones.

With imports sourced from over 40 countries, the government has reiterated its commitment to maintaining supply stability and easing pressure on domestic fuel markets.

Masked man smashes through Delhi Assembly gates, leaves bouquet; 3 held

NEW DELHI

A masked man drove an SUV into Delhi Assembly premises on Monday afternoon in a security breach and escaped after placing a bouquet outside the Speaker's office, but within hours the driver was apprehended, police said.

The SUV entered the premises by forcing its way through one of the boundary gates where the security is less compared to the main gate.

Police sounded a high alert in the capital following the incident even as investigators and bomb disposal squads

conducted intensive searches in the Assembly premises and adjoining areas.

The incident took place around 2 PM when the UP registered SUV entered the premises.

As soon as he entered the premises, officials said, the driver proceeded towards the office of Speaker Vijender Gupta and placed a bouquet near the porch before rushing out in his vehicle. There was less security at the gate through which the driver entered, as the Assembly was not in session.

Authorities are treating the incident as a security breach, officials said, adding it has raised "serious" concerns.

Forensic teams also examined the bouquet, which was kept near the Speaker's office while the bomb disposal squad and dog squad, which conducted searches, ruled out any explosive threat.

JUSTICE FINALLY SERVED

Custodial death: 9 TN cops get death penalty

MADURAI

A court in Tamil Nadu's Madurai district on Monday awarded death sentence to nine policemen in the custodial deaths of trader P Jayaraj and his son J Benicks in Thoothukudi district that triggered nationwide outrage six years ago.

The policemen are Inspector Sridhar, Sub-Inspectors Balakrishnan and Raghu Ganesh, and police personnel Murugan, Samadurai, Muthuraja, Chelladurai, Thomas Francis, and Veilumuthu.

Underlining that this was a "case of abuse of authority", the court maintained that there are many honest police officers in the state and that the ruling will

not "instill fear among police". "Father and son stripped, ruthlessly assaulted... Heart shudders reading about it," the court said.

Terming the brutal custodial torture and subsequent death of traders as the "rarest of rare" cases, the CBI had pressed for the maximum penalty of a death sentence or life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

The prosecution argued that the ghastly nature of the crime, supported by the testimonies of three direct witnesses, shocked the collective conscience of society. Highlighting the grave human rights violation, the CBI noted that the victims were subjected to merciless beatings with weapons, warranting the highest degree of punishment.

WHAT'S THE CASE

The custodial torture dates back to June 19, 2020, when Jayaraj and Benicks, who ran a mobile shop, were arrested for allegedly keeping their shop open beyond permitted hours during the lockdown, a claim later found to be false. The men were tortured at the Sattankulam Police Station in Thoothukudi district the whole night till early morning, and were then put behind bars in the Kovilpatti Sub Jail after a local magistrate remanded them to judicial custody, ignoring their severe injuries from torture. However, over the next two days, both complained of breathlessness and died in a hospital on June 22 and 23. Relatives alleged that the men were assaulted through the night at the police station, pointing to injuries including rectal bleeding and other signs of severe physical abuse.

QUICK READ

2 killed while crossing highway, biker booked

BENGALURU

Two men were killed in an early morning accident on National Highway 44 near Vidyashilpa Cross in Yelahanka. The victims, Siddartha (18) and Shanthappa Metri (35), residents of Allalsandra and natives of Sedam in Kalaburagi, worked as labourers. Police said they had returned from Hyderabad on a private bus and got down near Vidyashilpa Cross, where there is no designated stop. While attempting to cross the highway, they were hit by a speeding KTM Duke heading towards Devanahalli. The impact caused fatal injuries, killing both on the spot. The rider, Altaf Pasha (19) from Mathikere, sustained fractures. Police suspect he was racing with friends, had borrowed the bike, and did not possess a valid licence.A complaint has been filed against the rider, the bus driver for stopping at an unauthorised point, and the National Highways Authority of India for failing to install median barriers.

Power disruption in parts of city today

BENGALURU

The work of connecting the lines of 66 KV Jadigenahalli and 220 KV Vikarajpura power stations will be carried out on Tuesday, from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. There will be power disruption in areas of Hoskote 66/11 KV. Areas covered by electricity distribution includes Hoskote town, Upparahalli, Lakkondahalli, Alappanahalli, Kallahalli, Vabasandra, Venkatapura, Thimmasandra, Pettanahalli, Doddagattiganabbe, Chikkagattiganadde, Sarkar Guttahalli, Bhaktarahalli, Poojenagrahara, Kannurahalli, Dandupalya, Kolathur, Attur, Dasarahalli, Halasahalli, Attivatti, Nidagatta, and surrounding areas. The Assistant Executive Engineer, BESCOM Hoskote Division has requested customers to cooperate.

Student dies after mobike collides with electric pole

BENGALURU

In a tragic incident, a student died on the spot after his two-wheeler rammed into an electric pole on the Budigere-Bagalur road late on Sunday night. The deceased has been identified as Prashanth (22), who was riding a two-wheeler, while Teja (22) is undergoing treatment at Devanahalli Government Hospital. The incident took place under Channarayapatna police station limits.

B'luru needs more infra to ease congestion: BTP report

Bengaluru needs 25 underpasses, 35 flyovers, 101 skywalks to ease traffic, with bus-stop shifts and waterlogging fixes recommended

BENGALURU

Bengaluru will need 25 new underpasses, 35 fresh flyovers and 101 skywalks if the city truly hopes to ease its paralysing traffic congestion, according to a detailed infrastructure audit submitted by the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). The BTP has flagged 25 key junctions where underpasses or signal free junctions would help cut weaving and turning conflicts, while 35 locations have been shortlisted for new flyovers and elevated corridors to bypass busy intersections. Planners say these structures should work in tandem with 101 skywalks designed to pull pedestrians off the road, allowing smoother flow for buses, autos and private vehicles and cutting accident prone crossing conflicts.The audit also calls for relocating 103 unscientifically placed bus stops within 50 metres of major junctions, which currently act as friction points that choke entire corridors. Authorities have identified 137 chronic waterlogging spots and plan to fix them before the monsoon, while the GBA intends to weave these recommendations into the next infrastructure budget to fund new underpasses, flyovers and skywalks.Urban mobility experts, however, warn that building more concrete structures will not suffice unless last mile connectivity, public transport priority lanes, and strict enforcement of traffic rules are integrated into the same plan.

SILK BOARD METRO GAP

250-metre walk now, travelator link months away

BENGALURU

A key interchange gap at Silk Board Junction in Bengaluru is raising concerns among commuters, as two metro lines under the same hub remain unconnected internally.

The issue arises from the design of the interchange between the operational RV Road-Bommasandra corridor and the under-construction Silk Board-KR Puram line. While both stations are part of the Silk Board hub, there is currently no direct internal link between them.

The RV Road-Bommasandra stretch has been functional since August 2025, providing connectivity to south Bengaluru, including Electronic City.

Until a proper connection is completed, passengers shifting between these two lines will have to exit one station and walk through the busy Silk Board junction to reach the other. This involves covering a distance of around 250 metres, which is a major inconvenience considering Silk Board is one of the most congested traffic points in the city.The timing of the solution has also become a concern. Although the KR Puram-bound line is expected to open later this year, the proposed travelator connection will take about nine months after construction begins. Once completed, however, the project is expected to significantly improve connectivity. Silk Board is a crucial junction linking south Bengaluru with the eastern IT corridor. An internal connection will allow passengers to switch between lines without stepping out into traffic, making travel smoother and safer.

According to project details, the plan includes a dedicated elevated walkway supported by structural elements, along with proper architectural finishing to handle heavy passenger movement.

The design aims to offer more than a basic path, ensuring a proper interchange experience at one of the busiest transit points in the city.A travelator, also known as a moving walkway, is a flat motorised belt that helps passengers cover distances faster. Unlike escalators, it has no steps and allows people to either stand or walk while being carried forward. It does not replace walking but reduces time and effort, particularly in large transit spaces.

In the case of Silk Board, the travelator is not just an added feature but a necessary link. Without it, commuters must navigate one of the city's busiest junctions on foot. With it, the interchange will become seamless, allowing passengers.

K'taka orders probe into Hutti gold mines tendering row

BENGALURU

In a serious embarrassment, Karnataka government has ordered a probe into 2025 tendering irregularities at Hutti Gold Mines Co Ltd, the only active gold-producing unit in the country. The Secretary of the commerce and industries department ordered the probe in late Feb into the tendering process at HGML, owned by Karnataka govt. Its chairman is JT Patil is a Congress MLA. Hutti mines are in Raichur district. Bids had been called for purchase of forged steel grinding balls, a basic component to grind materials into fine powders, essential for efficient processing and production. Two key allegations under probe are: Tendering process was redefined midway through disqualifying bidders, and a second modification kept bidders from some countries out of the process. Calling the controversy not major, Patil told, the tendering process is being set right. He said a meeting of HGML board will take place in the second week of April soon after bypolls to Bagalkot and Davanagere assembly constituencies are completed. The investigation was ordered based on some changes made in the tender conditions by local officials. It is not a big problem. The technical committee has submitted its report.

Based on it we will take further action, Patil added.

A three-member technical panel led by N Mallikarjun, head of mechanical engineering department, SJ Government Polytechnic, is looking into the unauthorised modifications to the tender conditions, and the resulting violations of the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (KTPP) Act and suggest remedial measures and administrative due diligences to overcome discrepancies for the smooth functioning of the company. The genesis of the probe began with a tender being called for the purchase of forged steel grinding balls on July 1 2025. Following the receipt of bids by bidders (4 bidders for 125 mm and 6 bidders for 65 mm), the technical evaluation was purportedly completed on September 18, 2025.

However, it is observed that the HGML failed to conduct evaluation in accordance with prescribed procedures, arbitrarily disqualifying all participating vendors on the same day, noted the Secretary, adding that the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of all the bidders were refunded prematurely within a single day of the tender cancellation. Acting on the appeal of the bidders, revisional authority passed an order on November 14, 2025, directing the tender accepting authority to adopt a comprehensive and suitably calibrated approach to document scrutiny in future tenders, ensuring both substantive capability and compliance requirements are duly appreciated.

Based on this, and the nature of the requirement for uninterrupted operations to draw gold, HGML was asked to call for a fresh tender on February 3, 2026.Even in this fresh tender, the department found that due diligence and proper application of mind did not appear to have been exercised.

The government found that HGML had modified the tender clauses to impose new restrictions on public procurement from bidders of certain countries, necessitating the registration of a land border sharing declaration certificate.

The clause was considered as one without recording cogent reasons or proper justification which effectively forbid early participants from taking part in the new bidding process.

IOC ramps up auto LPG supply, urges shift to petrol

BENGALURU

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC), reiterating that it has increased LPG supply in Bengaluru, on Sunday also urged auto drivers to temporarily switch to petrol, noting that nearly 70 percent of the city's autorickshaw fleet is equipped with dual-fuel capability.The long queues outside our filling stations are because we have not stopped supply. Also, our rates are cheaper than whatever is being sold at private stations, an official said. According to IOC, auto LPG is currently being sold at Rs 89.5 per litre at PSU outlets in Bengaluru, compared to Rs 99-105 per litre at private stations. This price gap, coupled with the shutdown of a large number of private outlets, has pushed more customers towards public sector pumps. Officials said nearly 80 percent of over 300 private Auto LPG Dispensing Stations (ALDS).

Karnataka bags 3rd position at India Skills 2025-26

BENGALURU

Karnataka has secured the 3rd position at the IndiaSkills 2025-26 National Competition, held at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida recently.

Represented by 48 competitors across 32 skills, the state earned 29 honors, finishing behind Odisha and Tamil Nadu. Achievements spanned high-tech and creative domains including cloud computing, cybersecurity, mechatronics, additive manufacturing and bakery and visual merchandising.

Capt Kaustav Nath, state official and mentor for team Karnataka, acknowledged the result as a stepping stone. We have shown immense talent, but we cannot be complacent. We need to do better next time to reclaim the top spot.

He extended gratitude to Skill Development and Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanprakash Patil, senior officials EV Ramanna Reddy, Manoj Kumar Meena, HN Gopala Krishna and BS Sumathi for their guidance and support.

Karnataka students trained by Karnataka Skill Development Corporation (KSDC) won total 29 medals including 10 gold, 6 silver, 6 bronze and 7 medallions for excellence.

Gold, silver and bronze medalists will now enter rigorous training to compete for a spot representing India at WorldSkills International, Shanghai, China, with the state government committed to providing world-class infrastructure and mentorship.

Centre has not supplied even minimum amount of gas to state: GP

BENGALURU

Home Minister G Parameshwar expressed his displeasure that the Central Government has not supplied even the minimum amount of gas to the state. This is the reason for the problem.Speaking about the LPG shortage, the Minister said, we have made a demand to the Centre. The allotment that should be given to a state should be given. There is some difficulty. Everyone knows this. Everyone has been in trouble due to the war. The Central Government has not supplied the gas that the state should have. Should it at least supply the minimum That is why there is a problem.

4 RESCUED UP CHILDREN SLIP OUT OF MOVING VEHICLE

BENGALURU

Four children rescued from suspected child labour slipped out of a moving vehicle and vanished into traffic in central Bengaluru on April 2, raising concerns over safety protocols during child protection operations. The children, aged between 13 and 16, had been picked up a day earlier from BMTC bus station in Majestic, following a tip-off.

According to a complaint filed by BOSCO, a not-for-profit, the boys, all from a village in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, were allegedly brought to the city to work as painters by a man identified as Brijesh. Rescue teams traced the children around 11.15am on April 1 and took them to a shelter facility in Gandhinagar. The next day, as per procedure, they were produced before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) for further directions.Officials said the children, along with three others rescued in similar circumstances, were transported in a Mahindra Bolero to appear before the committee around 11am. A doctor and staff members accompanied them. Following the hearing, the team began transporting the children back to the shelter home later in the afternoon. The escape occurred at about 2.05pm near an Urdu school on the Mysore Road down ramp along Dr TCM Royan Road. With traffic congestion slowing the vehicle to a crawl, the four boys, seated at the rear, managed to open the back door and jump out. They took advantage of the slow-moving traffic and ran towards a side road behind the school. By the time staff realised what had happened and gave chase, the children had already dispersed and could not be located, a police officer said. Initial findings point to negligence, with officials confirming that the rear door of the vehicle had not been secured. The incident has also drawn attention to the city's persistent traffic bottlenecks, which inadvertently created the conditions for the escape.

A case has been registered under Section 137(2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for kidnapping at Cottonpet police station. Investigators are scanning CCTV footage from nearby areas, including roads around the school and the KSR Bengaluru City Railway Station, to trace the children. Police have also contacted the father of one of the boys, who works as a labourer in Bengaluru, to check if the children have attempted to return home. So far, there has been no contact.

Officials said all four children are school dropouts and may have travelled voluntarily in search of work. At this stage, it does not appear to be a trafficking case, but we are examining all angles, the officer added.

BOON FOR BOYS

FREE BUS TRAVEL FOR BOYS UP TO SECOND PUC IN THE STATE

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government is preparing to introduce a student-friendly transport system with the aim of ensuring safe and smooth travel for school children across the state. In this regard, the government has planned to extend the benefits of free travel in KSRTC buses to male children up to class 12.

Action is being taken following the recommendations made by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The Transport Department has directed all State Transport Corporations to examine this proposal and take action.

The initiative seeks to improve the safety and provide reliable transport facilities to students who rely heavily on public buses, especially in rural and backward areas. Officials said that several cases of children falling from buses and getting injured have been reported. Thus, it highlights the need for a safe system. Currently, free travel is available only to girl students in the state.

To address congestion and accessibility issues, the plan includes introducing special school and college buses on routes with high numbers of students, especially in rural areas. Additional trips are proposed during morning and evening peak hours, in line with school timings.Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said that the system will be implemented in a phased manner. A child-friendly transport system is being introduced in the state. In the first phase, it will be implemented in the districts around Bengaluru, and then it will be gradually expanded, he said. Efforts are being made to purchase more buses to support this initiative.The proposed framework includes several safety measures. All buses will have to be equipped with CCTV cameras, GPS tracking systems and emergency panic buttons. It will be mandatory to display the child helpline number 1098 on every bus. The authorities plan to strictly enforce route adherence and timings in bus services.

In addition, drivers and transport staff will undergo mandatory annual refresher courses on child rights. This training will include awareness of laws related to child protection. It is also recommended to deploy female conductors on routes with a large number of girls.Officials said the aim of the initiative is to build a safer and more accessible public transportation system for students, supporting their continued education.

QUICK READ

Students asked to download hall tickets for class 6 entrance exams

VIJAYAPURA

Hall tickets for Class 6 entrance examinations for the academic year 2026–27 have been released for residential schools functioning under the Minority Welfare Department, including Morarji Desai Residential Schools, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Residential Schools, and Government Muslim Residential Schools.

According to District Minority Welfare Officer Prashant Pujari, the entrance examination will be held on April 12. Students can download their hall tickets from the official website of the Minority Welfare Department. He added that students can also access and download their hall tickets through the mobile numbers registered during the application process. Candidates and parents have been advised to download the hall tickets well in advance to avoid last-minute inconvenience. For further information, they can contact the District Minority Welfare Office located at Maulana Azad Bhavan, Zilla Panchayat Road, Kanakadasa Colony, Vijayapura–586109, or call 08352-295523, the official said in a release.

119th birth anniversary of Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram celebrated in Bidar

BIDAR

The 119th birth anniversary of Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram was celebrated with grandeur in Bidar, with leaders highlighting his immense contributions and enduring legacy of social equality. Speaking after inaugurating the programme at Dr. Channabasava Pattadevar Auditorium, Minister for Municipal Administration and Hajj Rahim Khan described Jagjivan Ram as an exceptional leader who rose from an oppressed background to become the Deputy Prime Minister of India. He said Jagjivan Ram played a key role in addressing India's food crisis in the 1970s and strengthening agricultural self-reliance, earning recognition as a pioneer of the Green Revolution. His services as Defence Minister during the 1971 war and as a long-serving Union Minister were also lauded. The Minister announced that □2 crore has been sanctioned for a building in his honour, with scope for additional funds. In a message, Eshwar Khandre paid tribute and urged people to follow Jagjivan Ram's ideals. Dr. Mahadevi Hebbale delivered a lecture, while several officials and public representatives attended.

Free cancer screening camp for women at Gudage Hospital

BIDAR

A free cancer screening camp exclusively for women will be organized at Gudage Hospital on April 7 (today)from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, according to gynaecologist Dr. Sharada Sachin Gudage. The camp will include screening for breast cancer and other cancer-related conditions, aiming to promote early detection and awareness among women. Renowned cancer researcher Dr. Srinivas Tejaswi Adad will participate in the camp and provide expert consultation.

The programme will be inaugurated by Dr. Gangambike Akka, President of Basava Seva Pratishthana, Basavagiri. Cardiologist.

Vijayapura launches 3-month survey for children

CEO directed to coordinate with Literacy and Women-Child Departments to collect data on six-year-olds; Ahmed reviewed minority welfare schemes and clarified social media post regulations

VIJAYAPURA

A comprehensive survey of six-year-old children in Vijayapura district will be completed within three months, said U. Nisar Ahmed, Chairman of the Karnataka State Minorities Commission. He announced the initiative during a press conference at the Deputy Commissioner's office on Monday.

Ahmed explained that while school enrollment data exists, there is no reliable information on children who are out of the education system. "If there are 100 children aged six, about 80 may be in schools, but we do not have accurate data on the remaining 20. This gap must be addressed immediately," he said.

Directions have been issued to the Chief Executive Officer to hold coordination meetings with officials from the Literacy Department and the Women and Child Development Department. The goal is to collect detailed information on all six-year-old children, ensuring that no child is left out. The initiative will start as a pilot project in Vijayapura district, with the hope that it will help the government plan better-targeted policies for early education.

During the press conference, Ahmed also reviewed the implementation of minority welfare schemes, assessing whether benefits are reaching the intended recipients. On social media regulation, he clarified that the police cannot delete objectionable posts directly but can instruct users to remove them. Last year, Vijayapura police successfully ensured the deletion of 21 such posts, with a similar number already removed this year.

Ahmed highlighted employment initiatives, including a job fair in Bengaluru organized with a university that offered on-the-spot appointments from over 200 companies. An employment platform has been launched to provide information on job opportunities, and free coaching for competitive examinations is being offered, especially for North Karnataka.

He emphasized that over the past one-and-a-half years, the Commission has focused on promoting communal harmony and social cohesion. Initiatives such as honoring achievers from different religions have been undertaken to strengthen unity in the region.

The meeting was attended by Zilla Panchayat CEO Rishi Anand and officials from various departments. The comprehensive survey and related initiatives aim to ensure that all children in Vijayapura have access to education and that social welfare reaches those who need it most.

Yatnal's potential return sparks BJP excitement

VIJAYAPURA

BJP Vijayapura president said Yatnal's return depends on discipline, respecting leadership, and aligning with state BJP leaders

Political circles in Karnataka are buzzing over the possible return of Vijayapura City MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), just ahead of the Bagalkot Assembly by-election. Yatnal, who was expelled from the party on March 26, 2025, for alleged anti-party activities, has remained politically active and influential since his exit.

Despite his expulsion, Yatnal has stated that his removal "caused no loss either to the BJP or to me," signaling his confidence in maintaining a strong political presence. His participation in campaigning for the neighbouring Bagalkot by-election has fueled speculation about a potential 'ghar wapsi'—a strategic return to the party fold.

BJP Vijayapura district president Gurulingappa Angadi noted that Yatnal's return would depend on his willingness to follow party discipline and respect leadership. "No leader is bigger than Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Angadi said, adding that alignment with Karnataka BJP President B. Y. Vijayendra and state leadership would be key to a smooth re-entry.

Observers say Yatnal's continued engagement at the grassroots level has helped him maintain his influence among local party workers. Many BJP insiders believe that if Yatnal returns with a cooperative approach, it could energize the cadre and strengthen the party's position in North Karnataka, especially with elections approaching.

Meanwhile, opposition leaders from the Indian National Congress have criticized the potential move, arguing that reintroducing a previously expelled leader exposes leadership gaps within the BJP. Some political analysts suggest Yatnal may have considered alternative political alignments, but his recent activities show a pragmatic shift toward reconciliation with the party.

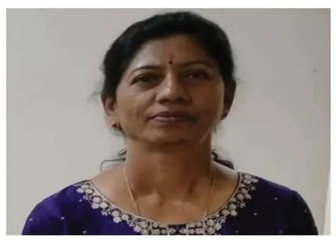
Analysts also point out that Yatnal's possible return could serve dual purposes: boosting his political prospects while consolidating BJP's vote base in Vijayapura and nearby areas. The Bagalkot by-election is now being seen as a testing ground for this strategic move, which could reshape local political dynamics in the months ahead.

As speculation continues, both party workers and political observers are closely watching Yatnal's actions, signaling a high-stakes moment for BJP leadership and the future of regional politics in North Karnataka.

Burnt woman's body identified; Murder suspected near Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI

In a shocking development, the identity of a woman whose partially burnt body was found near Kalamud village in Kamalapur taluk has been established. The deceased has been identified as Jyoti Chandrashekhar Kapale (57), a resident of Anand Nagar near S.B. College in Kalaburagi and a government school teacher at a senior primary school in Vanjarkhed village of Bhalki taluk.According to police sources, Jyoti, who was unmarried, had been residing in a rented house in Basavakalyan and



used to visit Kalaburagi during holidays. She attended school on April 2 and returned to Kalaburagi on April 3 for the Good Friday holiday. However, she reportedly left her house the same day and did not return. Her body was discovered on Saturday by the roadside, about one kilometre from Kalamud village. Senior police officials, including Superintendent of Police Addur Srinivasulu, Additional SP Mahesh Meghannavar, DYSP N. Lokesh, and CPI Shivashankar Sahu, visited the spot and conducted an inspection. Initially, the victim was believed to be aged between 22 and 25 due to the condition of the body. Police found chilli powder scattered near the body and noted injuries on the face, raising suspicion that the victim was attacked with a sharp weapon and later burnt. A case has been registered, and police have launched a manhunt to trace the accused. Further investigation is underway.

Dr. Babuji Bhavan built at cost of ₹2.25 cr in Shahapur

SHAHAPUR

The construction of Dr. Babuji Bhavan, dedicated to former Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram, has been completed at a cost of ₹2.25 crore and will be inaugurated soon, said Minister for Small Scale Industries and Public Enterprises Sharanabasappa Gowda Darshanapur. Speaking to reporters after inspecting the building works near Rakhmagera in the city, the Minister stated that the project, which had been progressing slowly for a long time, has now been completed.

Vijayapura pedestrians struggle amid missing footpaths

VIJAYAPURA

Even years after being upgraded to a municipal corporation in 2013, Vijayapura continues to face a serious urban problem—missing footpaths. Thousands of pedestrians in the city are forced to walk on busy roads, risking accidents every day.

In central areas and major roads, footpaths have almost disappeared due to widespread encroachment by shopkeepers and street vendors. Citizens are left navigating among speeding vehicles, creating chaos and congestion. Streets such as Station Road, Gandhi Chowk, Athani Road, Solapur Road, and Bagalkot Road may have improved surfaces, but safe walking spaces are virtually nonexistent.Footpaths have been turned into marketplaces, with mobile shops, garment stores, food stalls, fruit vendors, and tea outlets occupying pedestrian spaces. Even when shop interiors have sufficient room, goods are displayed outside, worsening the situation. Citizens attempting to address these encroachments are often met with hostility.

"Even if we ask them to keep the space clear, they say authorities don't object—so why should we?" said one resident.Traffic congestion further adds to the problem. Areas like Gandhi Circle, DC Office Road, Old Bus Stand, Jalnagar, Court Circle, and Rotary Circle see heavy vehicular movement daily.

Illegal parking in front of shops and hotels blocks already crowded roads, making it even harder for pedestrians to move safely.

The Vijayapura City Corporation has largely remained silent despite the growing crisis.

Early morning encroachment drive clears key road stretch

VIJAYAPURA

Residents of Vijayapur woke up to the sound of JCB machines early morning as the City Municipal Corporation launched an encroachment clearance drive along the busy stretch from Ataulla Circle to Jumma Masjid Road. The operation was carried out under the guidance of Municipal Commissioner Vijaykumar Mekkalaki, targeting unauthorized structures and encroachments that were obstructing traffic and public movement.

According to officials, prior notices had been issued to shopkeepers, instructing them to vacate the encroached areas. However, many failed to comply within the stipulated time, prompting the authorities to take action.Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Mekkalaki stated that the drive was essential for the overall development of the city and to ensure smoother traffic flow. He emphasized that such measures are necessary to maintain urban order and improve infrastructure. The drive witnessed the deployment of municipal staff and police personnel to maintain law and order during the clearance process. Further drives are expected in other parts of the city as part of the corporation's ongoing efforts to make Vijayapur cleaner and more organized.

Five-day 'Buddha–Basava–Ambedkar Book Fair' to begin in Vijayapura

VIJAYAPURA

A five-day Buddha–Basava–Babasaheb Ambedkar Book Fair will be held for the first time in Vijayapura at Darbar High School Ground from April 10, with extensive preparations underway, said progressive thinker and Ladayi Prakashana head Basavaraj Sulibhavi. Addressing a press conference, he said the fair is being organized in collaboration with May Sahitya Mela Vijayapura group and various Dalit and progressive organisations. A unique procession of writers carrying their own books will mark the opening.

The event will be inaugurated on April 10 at 12 noon by DSS State Coordinator Mavalli Shankar, with Belagavi Regional Commissioner K. M. Janaki presiding and noted writer G. V. Pawar delivering the keynote address. The fair will feature seminars, student interactions, poetry sessions, cultural programmes, and book releases over five days. Special lectures by thinkers including Dr. Meenakshi Bali and Dr. H. Anupama are scheduled.On April 14, the birth anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar will be observed, with noted thinker Shivasundar delivering the keynote speech. Sulibhavi said the fair aims to promote knowledge and human values, urging Minister M. B. Patil to support library development in every village. Several activists and organisers were present.

Applications invited for Grama One franchise

VIJAYAPURA

The district administration has invited online applications for setting up Grama One franchise centres through the Seva Sindhu Portal, aimed at delivering government services at the doorstep of citizens.Under this initiative, more than 750 citizen services are being provided through Grama One centres across the state. As part of the expansion, one Grama One service centre each is proposed to be established at Yerazari village in Muddebihal taluk and Kokatanur village in Sindagi taluk.

SIR process an attack on unarmed citizens, Says Shivasundar

YADGIRI

Terming the SIR process as an "attack on unarmed citizens," noted thinker Shivasundar alleged that it is not a routine administrative exercise but a systematic mission with political intent. He was speaking at a seminar titled "Citizenship Question and Political Conspiracies" organized as part of the 135th birth anniversary celebrations of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. The event was held at Matoshree Family Restaurant in the city with participation from Dalit, progressive, farmers', minority, and labour organizations.

Referring to the Constitution-making period of 1947–49, Shivasundar said the Indian Constitution emerged from a historic struggle against inequality. He emphasized that Ambedkar's principle of "one vote, one value" makes the voter list the foundation of democracy. He alleged that the SIR process is unconstitutional and goes beyond voter list revision by raising questions of citizenship. "It effectively asks people to prove whether they are citizens," he said.

Severe LPG shortage hits hotel sector in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI

The Kalyana Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KKCCI) and the Hotel Association have expressed serious concern over the acute shortage of LPG cylinders in the city, which has severely affected the hotel industry. The disruption in LPG supply, reportedly linked to the ongoing conflict situation in the Middle East, has led to irregular availability of commercial cylinders over the past month, putting hotel owners under significant strain.

At a joint meeting held at the KKCCI office, hotel owners voiced strong dissatisfaction over the inconsistent supply. They alleged that while registered commercial establishments are struggling to procure LPG, unregistered units and street vendors continue to access cylinders, indicating irregularities and possible misuse in the distribution system.

Members also pointed out that commercial LPG cylinders are being sold in the black market at inflated prices, further worsening the crisis. While acknowledging that the government is prioritizing domestic consumers, educational institutions, and hospitals, the participants stressed that neglecting the hotel, mess, and bakery sectors—key contributors to employment and the local economy—is unfair. KKCCI has urged the government to allocate a separate quota for commercial LPG users, ensure regular supply, maintain transparency in distribution, and provide advance notice regarding any restrictions.The association appealed to authorities to take immediate steps to address the crisis affecting one of the city's major economic sectors. KKCCI President Sharanabasappa M. Papp, Secretary Shivaraj V. Inginashetti, Hotel Association Honorary President Rajashekhar Shellagi, President Narasimha Menden, State Vice-President Satyanath Shetty, and other members were present at the meeting.

QUICK READ

Unidentified man found dead near Dharmasthala river

Dharmasthala

The decomposed body of an unidentified man was discovered near Netravati Snanaghatta on Monday afternoon. Authorities from Dharmasthala Police arrived at the scene, examined the body, and transferred it to Mangaluru Hospital for further investigation. Initial reports suggest the man may have committed suicide, though police are continuing inquiries to determine the exact cause of death. Local residents expressed shock at the discovery. Investigators are collecting evidence and speaking to nearby witnesses to piece together the events leading to the man's death.

Short circuit sparks fire, house reduced to ashes

Neralakatte

A house in Handakunda, Neralakatte was completely destroyed after a suspected electrical short circuit. The home of Ganapu Shedti, including his grandson's belongings, was burnt, with gold, cash, TV, clothes, and other items lost. Roof and walls collapsed, causing damages estimated over Rs. 5 lakh. Fire began around midnight, discovered at 2 a.m. by a passerby. Kundapur Fire Brigade and locals controlled the flames, preventing nearby structures from catching fire. Police and officials are investigating the incident to confirm the cause.

SIDDARAMAIAH HITS BACK AT BJP LEADERS CRITICISM

Chief Minister said leadership requires public trust, dismissed Kumaraswamy's claims, and praised senior leaders' dedication and campaign efforts

DAVANAGERE

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah strongly criticised opposition leaders and questioned their past remarks about the BJP, RSS, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking to the media in Davanagere, he asked whether people remember what leaders like H D Deve Gowda, H D Kumaraswamy, and Chaluvadi Narayanaswamy had said about the BJP and RSS in the past. He questioned their moral right to criticise the Congress now.

Siddaramaiah said the public has supported the government's welfare guarantee schemes and accused the BJP of opposing benefits meant for the poor. He claimed that people would not support a party that stands against welfare and constitutional values.

Responding to Kumaraswamy's remarks about elections, the Chief Minister said leaders cannot claim public support after facing defeat. He pointed to election results to question such claims and said leadership must be based on people's trust.

He also dismissed concerns about campaign efforts, saying party leaders have worked across regions and supported candidates actively. He described senior leaders as committed workers who continue to strengthen the party at all levels.

Targeting political shifts, Siddaramaiah said some leaders had earlier benefited from Congress but later joined the BJP for personal reasons. He urged them to remember their earlier statements before criticising others.

The Chief Minister also criticised the decline of the JD(S), noting that its electoral strength has reduced over time. He rejected allegations about lack of support for development, responding with sharp remarks on leadership and performance.

Joshi warns against Congress family politics rising

Joshi criticized Congress for dynastic politics, citing Gandhi and Shamanur families' dominance in Davanagere, warning it limits opportunities, urging citizens to challenge concentrated power and corruption

DAVANAGERE

Union Food and Civil Supplies Minister Pralhad Joshi strongly criticized the Congress party for promoting family politics during a press conference in Davanagere on Monday. He said the party is prioritizing dynastic control over public service and ignoring capable leaders.

Joshi said the Congress high command is dominated by the Gandhi family nationally, while in Davanagere, the Shamanur family holds significant influence. "They are nurturing family politics, putting their members ahead of loyal party workers," he said. He warned that this trend threatens to dominate the region for decades.

Highlighting the next generation, Joshi claimed that Congress leaders are preparing a political entry for Priyanka Vadra's son, possibly in a neighboring constituency. He noted that in Davanagere alone, the family already controls multiple positions: the father and son serve as MLAs, while the daughter-in-law is an MP. He suggested that this concentration of power leaves little room for others to participate meaningfully in politics.

Joshi questioned whether any other capable leaders exist in Davanagere outside the Shamanur family. "The entire Davanagere is being captured by a single family. People must be careful," he said, urging citizens to challenge dynastic politics and corruption.

He also criticized local Congress workers for enabling family dominance. Referring to a recent controversy, Joshi said, "When the High Court ordered Karthika lamps to be lit, they switched off temple lamps and lit mosque lamps instead. This is the height of appeasement and misuse of power."

Joshi compared Congress's weak national performance with its regional concentration, citing states like Assam, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. He said dynastic politics has slowed genuine development and warned that without public intervention, democracy could be undermined. Davanagere has seen significant progress under past leaders such as former MP GM Siddeshwar and Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, he noted. "Congress must not use money and family power to stall the city's growth," Joshi added.

The press conference was attended by former MLA Arunkumar Pujara, MLA Srivatsa, H.P. Rajesh, and other local leaders, who supported Joshi's call for vigilance against dynastic politics and urged citizens to protect democratic values in Davanagere.

Parameshwara said leadership change rumors are personal opinions, affirmed high command decides, and stated no issues exist with current MLAs

Parameshwara says Siddaramaiah to continue as Chief Minister

MYSURU

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will continue in his post for another two years, dismissing rumours about any leadership change in the state.

Speaking to the media in Mysuru, Parameshwara said there is no need for any fresh clarification from the Congress high command. He explained that Siddaramaiah was chosen as Chief Minister in 2023 and his term is expected to continue smoothly.

He recalled that in 2013, there was no official announcement about a full five-year term, yet Siddaramaiah completed it successfully. He expressed confidence that the Chief Minister would complete his current tenure as well.

Parameshwara said there is no confusion within the party and any statements made about leadership change are personal opinions. He stressed that only the party high command has the authority to decide on such matters, and so far, no such decision has been discussed.

He also spoke about Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, saying there are no issues within the leadership. He added that all party MLAs are capable leaders, but there is no question of any change at present.

Addressing by-election results, Parameshwara said they should not be seen as a measure of the government's performance. He said such results do not reflect the overall political situation in the state.

He expressed confidence that the Congress would win

upcoming by-elections and said people support the government not only for its guarantee schemes but also for its governance and administrative work across Karnataka in recent times.

DC conducts on-site inspection to prevent sewage pollution

UDUPI

In a proactive move to address river pollution, the Deputy Commissioner of Udupi District, Swaroopa T.K., conducted a site inspection along the Indrani River, which flows through Udupi city.

The inspection, carried out in coordination with officials from the Udupi City Municipal Council, aimed to halt the inflow of sewage water that has been polluting the river and to initiate measures for its cleanup.

The announcement was made by the Deputy Commissioner, emphasising the district administration's commitment to restoring the river's health through immediate field-level action. This inspection underscores ongoing local efforts to tackle urban environmental challenges in the coastal Karnataka district.

Santosh Lad slams BJP over divisive politics

DAVANAGERE

Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad criticised the BJP, saying the party does not represent all Hindus and is focusing on division instead of development.

Speaking at a campaign meeting in Davanagere, he said temples across the country were built by people over generations, not by any single political party. "I am also a Hindu, and our ancestors built these temples," he said, stressing that religion should not be used for political gain.

Lad claimed that the state government's welfare schemes are benefiting families, with many receiving financial support through guarantees and pensions. He accused the BJP of lacking clear plans and relying on targeting communities during elections.

He also reacted to remarks made by H D Kumaraswamy about Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, saying such language was not appropriate in public life. He added that political leaders should maintain respect in their speech.

Raising concerns about governance at the national level, Lad questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi over lack of press interaction and decisions related to social media regulations.

Meanwhile, Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar highlighted rising prices of essential items like cooking gas and said financial aid provided by the state government has helped women become more secure.

Leaders at the event also praised local development work and urged voters to support Congress candidates. They said continued support would ensure more welfare schemes and development in the region.

The meeting ended with an appeal to voters to participate actively in the upcoming elections and make informed choices.

Bribery case ends with two-year sentence

SHIVAMOGGA

The Shivamogga court has sentenced R.S. Parameshwarappa, a district manager with the Devaraja Urs Backward Classes Development Corporation, to two years in prison and a fine of Rs. 40,000 for taking a bribe.

Parameshwarappa was caught by Lokayukta police in July 2017 while accepting Rs. 10,000 from H.S. Janardhan of Hosagunda in Sagar taluk. The bribe was linked to permission for drilling a pipe under the Ganga Kalyan project.

Deputy Superintendent of Police A. Chandrappa led the investigation and filed a chargesheet in court. Special Public Prosecutor M.D. Sundar Raj represented the government during the trial.

The 1st Additional District and Sessions and Special Court reviewed the case and found the officer guilty. The court hearing was held on April 2, 2016, after which the judge announced the sentence, sending a strong message against corruption in public offices. This verdict highlights the commitment to fight bribery in government services.

Shivamogga FID now required for farmers' urea purchases

SHIVAMOGGA

Farmers in Shivamogga must now have a Farmer ID (FID) to buy urea fertilizer, officials announced. Kiran Kumar, Joint Director of the Agriculture Department, said the rule will take effect from the 2026-27 monsoon season. The move aims to make fertilizer distribution transparent and curb black market sales.

Under the new system, the 'K-Kisan' software will ensure farmers receive only the fertilizer needed for their land area and crop type. Farmers without an FID must register immediately at the nearest Raitha Sampark Kendra, Horticulture Department, or Common Service Centers, bringing documents like the land register, bank passbook, and Aadhaar card. Farmers who already have FIDs can link all their survey numbers to their ID.

Authorized fertilizer sellers must enter farmers' FIDs into the K-Kisan system before selling. Officers have been trained to monitor compliance, and retail sellers must update all O Forms. The department warned that sellers providing fertilizer without registration, overcharging, or selling for non-agricultural use risk losing their licenses.

Officials said the system will help ensure fair distribution, reduce misuse, and support farmers in accessing fertilizers efficiently. The government emphasized that adherence to the FID rule is crucial for a smoother monsoon season and for improving agricultural productivity across the district. Farmers are encouraged to complete registrations and link their survey numbers without delay.

'By-elections burden Cong, CM faces pressure'

DAVANAGERE

BJP state president BY Vijayendra said the recent by-elections in Davanagere and Bagalkote have become a major burden for the Chief Minister and the Congress government, keeping them "awake and anxious."

Speaking at a press conference at the Davanagere BJP office, Vijayendra criticised the state government for failing to develop the region despite promising welfare guarantees. He claimed the CM, elected on the Ahinda coalition support, has ignored the community while blaming the Centre for shortcomings.

"These two by-elections are like an iron fist on the Congress. Our workers have gone beyond their limits to ensure victory for our candidate, Srinivas Dasakariappa. People want change," he said. Vijayendra also said the Congress's money and influence will not succeed, praising the cooperation of JDS workers alongside the BJP.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi joined the criticism, saying the Congress is weak and struggling nationally. He noted the party's poor handling of local issues and reliance on dynastic politics, including references to Priyanka Gandhi seeking a constituency for her son.

Joshi highlighted problems under the Congress government, such as delays in LPG and rice distribution, and accused leaders of favouring their own families rather than serving the people.

The BJP leaders urged voters to remain vigilant and support their candidates to curb Congress influence. They asserted that strong grassroots work by BJP workers will ensure success in both by-elections, reflecting public dissatisfaction with the current state administration.

This by-election campaign is seen as a critical test of the Congress government's performance and public support in Karnataka.

BUILD BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Governor urges students to innovate and lead

HAVERI

Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot called upon students to become creators of opportunities and not just job seekers while addressing the first convocation of Haveri University.

He said that in today's fast-changing world, continuous learning, innovation, and social responsibility are essential for success. He encouraged students to dream big, set high goals, and work consistently to achieve them.

Highlighting rapid developments in technology, he said fields like artificial intelligence, data science, and digital innovation are transforming everyday life. He urged students to use their knowledge and skills to contribute to building a strong and self-reliant nation.

The Governor described Karnataka as a land rich in knowledge, culture, and tradi-

tion. He said many great thinkers and scholars have been born here and have shaped society over time. He praised the establishment of Haveri University, noting that it has expanded access to education and supported the growth of rural and semi-urban areas.

He also appreciated the university administration and faculty for organising the first convocation in a short time, calling it a sign of dedication and excellence.

Stressing the importance of education, he said learning plays a key role in every stage of life and helps individuals grow in their chosen fields. He reminded students that learning never ends and that failure should not be feared.

"Failure is a step towards success," he said, urging students to focus on bringing positive change through their efforts.

The event was attended by Ashok B Hinchigeri and other dignitaries.

QUICK READ

Direct interview scheduled on April 9 in Mandya

Mandya

District Employment Exchange Office, in collaboration with Me|| Educare ITES and Me|| Swatantra Micro Finance, will hold a direct interview on April 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the Employment Exchange office opposite the RTO. The interview will fill vacancies for "Teachers (Spoken English)" and "Field/Collection Officers." Candidates aged 18–35 with SSLC, PUC, B. Com, BCA/BE, or any degree can attend with their resume. For details, applicants can call 9164642684, 9113500761, 9113875775, or 9741939716, according to the Mandya District Employment Officer.

Handloom subsidy proposals invited by Chitradurga

Chitradurga

Handloom and Textiles Department has invited applications for subsidies under the District Region (MMR) Scheme for 2026-27. Eligible weavers and cooperative societies can apply for working capital loans, study tours, and subsidies for handlooms and equipment. Proposals, along with required documents, must be submitted by April 15, 2026. The department encourages all interested applicants to contact the office at 08194-221426 or visit in person for guidance. The scheme aims to support local handloom enterprises, improve production capacity, and promote sustainable growth within the district's weaving community.

Kumaraswamy assures adequate resources for Mandya

Kumaraswamy assured adequate domestic fuel, diesel, petrol, prioritized gas for institutions, irrigation water for farmers, and sufficient village drinking water supply

MANDYA

Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries and Mandya MP H.D. Kumaraswamy assured residents on Monday that there is no shortage of essential resources, including water, domestic gas, petrol, and diesel, in the district. He spoke while presiding over the District Development Coordination and Supervision Committee meeting at the Zilla Panchayat Cauvery Hall.

Kumaraswamy said the district requires 10,800 cylinders daily for domestic use, and gas stocks are being maintained to meet demand. He emphasized that the public need not worry about domestic fuel supply. Similarly, more than 15 lakh liters of diesel and over 12 lakh liters of petrol are available, and strict instructions have been issued to all petrol stations not to allow panic purchases in cans.

He highlighted that while commercial gas supply remains limited, schools, residential institutions, and hospitals are being prioritized. Farmers have also been provided with sufficient water for irrigation. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar confirmed that 2 TMC of clean drinking water will continue to be supplied to villages each month until June. Villages facing summer water challenges are receiving additional supply through private borewells, ensuring that no area currently faces shortages.

Kumaraswamy reviewed several welfare programs in the district, including issuance of UDID cards to people with disabilities, distribution of more than 17 lakh 20 thousand Ayushman Bharat cards, and disbursement of Rs. 87.65 crore to 347 farmer entrepreneurs under the PMFAA scheme. He also stressed the need for officials to visit villages regularly to assess the progress of government schemes and ensure benefits reach the public.

The Minister called for effective measures to reduce unemployment by converting government programs into industries and urged authorities to tackle illegal gambling activities. Infrastructure projects were also discussed, including the construction of overbridges by the National Highways Authority, with 7 feet completed and 15 feet bridges underway.

The meeting was attended by MLAs Ravikumar and H.T. Manju, former MLA Puttaraju, former minister D.C. Thammanna, Zilla Panchayat CEO K.R. Nandini, District Superintendent of Police V.J. Shobharani, Additional District Collector B.C. Shivanandamurthy, and other district officials.

Kumaraswamy emphasized that coordinated action and continuous monitoring at the village level are crucial to ensure smooth delivery of resources and services for the people of Mandya.

BJP foundation day celebrated with service resolution

MLA Shailendra Beldale urged BJP workers to follow party principles, promote nationalism, good governance, development, and Antyodaya, focusing on serving people and uplifting weaker sections

BIDAR

Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and workers celebrated the party's Foundation Day in Bidar South constituency with enthusiasm, pledging to strengthen the organisation through public service.

Speaking at the event, MLA Shailendra Beldale urged party workers to follow the principles of the BJP in their daily lives. He called on everyone to work together to further develop the party and serve the people with dedication.

The programme was held at the BJP office near Bapur Cross on Manna Ekhelli Road. Leaders and workers gathered to reaffirm their commitment to the party's core values and ideals.

Beldale said the BJP stands for nationalism, good governance, and development, especially for the upliftment of weaker sections of society. He stressed that the party's guiding principle of "Antyodaya," which focuses on the welfare of the last person in society, should remain at the centre of all efforts.

He added that the vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" reflects the party's commitment to inclusive growth and equal opportunities for all citizens.

The MLA also highlighted the contribution of senior leaders and workers who helped build the party over the years. He said their dedication and sacrifices should inspire current members to continue working with commitment. During the event, senior leaders were honoured for their service, and their contributions were remembered with respect.

Several local leaders, office bearers, and party workers attended the programme and took part in the celebrations.

The event concluded with a collective resolve to expand the party's reach and work for the overall development of the constituency and the nation through continued public service efforts.

Deputy Commissioner Prabhu launched e-account campaign to issue 70,000–80,000 accounts, ensuring property owners receive certificates efficiently

Chikkaballapura launches major e-account drive

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu launched a special e-account campaign on Monday, aiming to issue 70,000 to 80,000 e-accounts over the next three to four months across municipal limits in the district. The program was inaugurated at the Chikkaballapura Municipal Corporation premises under the e-Asthi initiative.

The campaign is part of the Special Revenue Village Campaign 2.0, which has already issued ownership certificates to 86,652 rural families. In municipal areas, 23,535 properties exist, with 11,391 e-accounts already distributed. The remaining 12,144 properties will receive e-accounts soon. Municipal staff will visit each property owner's residence to explain the necessary documents, ensuring 80 percent of pending accounts are issued within the target period.

The DC emphasized transparency and discipline in administration, asking citizens to submit applications only through official channels. A receipt section has been established in all offices, and from April 15, the e-Office administration system will be implemented in every department to monitor complaints, track applications, and identify delays efficiently. He instructed department heads to review pending files weekly to ensure smooth functioning.

Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu demonstrated the e-account process to the public and distributed application forms during the event, which drew considerable attention.

District Urban Development Cell Director Manjunath, Municipal Commissioner Mansur Ali, and several officials and citizens attended the launch.

The initiative is expected to enhance transparency, streamline property records, and provide residents with secure digital ownership certificates efficiently over the coming months.

Folklore roots celebrated at Pavagada cultural event

PAVAGADA

Folklore is the foundation of all art forms, said noted folk artist D Nagaraju during a cultural programme held in Gowdathimmanahalli village of Pavagada taluk.

Speaking at the Gadinad Folklore Geetagayana-2026 event, he explained that folklore began when humans settled into farming life. Songs sung by farmers to ease their hard work later became part of tradition and culture. He said folklore is deeply connected to daily life, rituals, and customs in rural areas.

The programme was organised by the Ekalavya Girijan Folklore Cultural Arts Association with support from the Kannada Culture Department. Artists and cultural leaders gathered to celebrate and preserve traditional art forms.

Hobli Kannada Sahitya Parishad President Ho M Nagaraju stressed the need to document folk artists across the taluk. He warned that many traditional art forms are fading as most artists belong to the older generation.

He listed popular local art forms such as Kolata, Bayalata, Sobanepada, and Somana Kunita, and said urgent steps are needed to preserve them. He also called for setting up a training or research centre to help young people learn these traditions.

Several artists shared their experiences and highlighted the importance of protecting folk culture. Cultural performances were a major attraction, with groups presenting folk songs, dances, and musical acts.

A colourful Kalajatha procession was also held through the village streets, showcasing various art forms. The event was attended by local leaders, artists, and villagers, reflecting strong community support for preserving the rich folklore heritage of the region for future generations.

Basaveshwara statue unveiled; leaders praise timeless ideals

DEVANAHALLI

In a grand ceremony at the Bengaluru Rural District Commissioner's office in Devanahalli, the bronze statue of Vishwaguru Basaveshwara, the 12th-century philosopher and social reformer, was unveiled. The event was jointly organized by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, and the Basaveshwara Statue Construction Committee.

Forest, Biology, and Environment Minister Ishwar B. Khandre spoke about Basaveshwara's lasting impact, saying, "His principles, which built an equal society, remain timeless. Promoting and spreading Basava's ideals is the need of the day." He highlighted how Basaveshwara led a revolution for equality during a time when society was marked by ignorance, illiteracy, and gender discrimination. Basaveshwara worked tirelessly to create a society based on freedom, equality, brotherhood, and coexistence, free from hierarchy and class divisions.

Minister Khandre also noted Basaveshwara's pioneering effort in establishing Anubhav Mantapa, considered the world's first parliament. "Around 770 scholars from different professions and communities gathered there to compose vows, laying the foundation for democratic thought," he said. The modern Anubhav Mantapa in Basavakalyana is under construction, with Rs. 280 crore released so far. The project is expected to open next year.

District In-charge Minister K.H. Muniyappa presided over the program and praised Basaveshwara as a supreme spirit whose teachings continue to guide social reform and humanism. ChikkaballapuraLok Sabha MP Dr. K. Sudhakar described Basaveshwara's ideals as a "guiding light," emphasizing the relevance of Dasoha, or social service, now focused on education, health, and food.

The unveiled bronze statue stands five feet tall, weighing 450 kg, and sits under a 28-foot pavilion. It was crafted at a cost of about Rs. 80 lakh.

Afzalpur lawyers demand arrest after Anil Rathod murder

AFZALPUR

The Taluk Bar Association has strongly condemned the brutal murder of lawyer Anil Rathod in Kalaburagi city, calling for urgent action against the accused.

Lawyers staged a protest in front of the Tahsildar's office, expressing anger and concern over growing attacks on legal professionals across the country.

Taluk Bar Association President S.S. Patil warned that assaults on lawyers undermine public faith in the judicial system.

He demanded that the investigation into Rathod's murder be expedited, the culprits arrested quickly, and strict punishment, including the death penalty for such violent crimes, be considered.

Patil also urged the government to implement special laws ensuring lawyers' safety and to provide proper protection for those engaged in judicial service.

Senior lawyer K.G. Poojary addressed the gathering, and later, a petition was submitted to the Governor through Tahsildar Sanjeev Kumar Dasara.

The protest drew support from numerous lawyers, including S.G. Hullur, K.D. Patel, Wasim Jagirdar, Anita Dodmani, M.S. Patil, Arjuna Kerura, C.S. Hiremath, S.T. Rathod, Suresh Avate, Anil Jamadar, Supriya Ankalagi, Santosh Sejole, Manjunath Dharigonda, Ramu Sutara, Siddu Ispura, Rajabhaskar, and Revubai, among others.

The lawyers emphasized that stronger protection and swift legal action are essential to prevent future attacks and maintain trust in India's judicial system.

The community hopes that this tragic incident will prompt immediate measures to safeguard legal professionals and ensure justice for Rathod.

Subsidy offered to SC/ST mobile canteen entrepreneurs

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The Chikkaballapura district administration has announced a scheme to support Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates in starting mobile canteens. Under the SCSP/TSP program, selected applicants will receive one-month skill development training in Entrepreneurship (EP) and a subsidy to run their canteen.

Applicants must be aged 20 to 55, have passed SSLC, hold a valid light vehicle driving license, and meet income limits—Rs. 2 lakh annually in urban areas and Rs. 1.5 lakh in rural areas. They must also submit documents including Aadhaar card, caste and income certificates, mark sheet, bank loan confirmation, residence proof, and an affidavit confirming they are not in any permanent government job. Applications must be submitted in duplicate, self-attested, in a sealed envelope by April 30, 2026, during office hours from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm at the Office of the Assistant Director, Tourism Department, Chikkaballapura.

HEALTH IS WEALTH

Rotary Club promotes health through trekking

RAMANAGARA

"Health is true wealth, and caring for it is essential to lead a stress-free life," said Subhashini Naidu. She spoke during the launch of a trek to Ramdevara Betta, organized by the Rotary Club to mark World Health Day and promote a healthy lifestyle.

The event was held in collaboration with Bangalore Rotary Club, Ramanagara Ramgarh Rockers Rotary Club, and Silk City Rotary Club. Subhashini Naidu emphasized that daily exercise, combined with a monthly trek or outing, helps relieve stress, improves mental peace, and keeps the mind and body healthy.

Ramanagara Ramgarh Rockers Rotary Club President M.H. Prakash shared the history of Ramdevara Betta, while Rekha, the first female director of Rotary Club 3191, introduced the program. Dr. Prakash Karanth delivered a lecture highlighting the importance of regular physical activity and wellness practices.

The trek saw participation from office bearers and members of multiple Rotary Clubs, including Bangalore South, Metro, Ullal, Girinagar, Southend, Highgrounds, South Parade, Upkar, South Samarpane, KGF, Mulbagalu Kendra, Magadi Central, and Kanakapura Clubs. Participants engaged in the trek, promoting fitness, camaraderie, and awareness of a balanced lifestyle.

The program served as a reminder that maintaining physical health is crucial in today's fast-paced world, and simple activities like trekking can strengthen both body and mind. Rotary leaders hope such initiatives will inspire citizens to adopt regular exercise and wellness habits.

QUICK READ

Grand puja event marks Rakkasamma anniversary celebration

Hunsur

The 52nd anniversary of Goddess Rakkasamma will be celebrated with a grand puja on April 9 at 7 p.m. in Shiva Jyoti Nagar near Shankar Math, Ward 20. Community leaders including Parveen Taj, Syed Rizwan, and Wasim Tanzeem donated essential items for anna santarpana. Temple head Prasadi Mahadevswamy and others were present. Devotees are expected to gather in large numbers for prayers, food offerings, and community celebrations during the festive occasion.

Mandya taluk to accept public complaints

Mandya

A program to receive public complaints and inquiries in Mandya taluk will be held on April 8 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the taluk office, supervised by Karnataka Lokayukta Mandya unit police officers. Notices about the program will be displayed in all government offices, and taluk-level officers and subject managers will be present at the central location to assist citizens. The Mandya Taluk Tahsildar has requested all officials to announce the program publicly and ensure participation to address public grievances efficiently on the scheduled day.

Bagalkote by-election: 2.59 lakh voters ready

Over 2.59 lakh voters will vote across 322 booths with staff, security, webcasting, and special polling stations to boost participation

BAGALKOTE

The Bagalkote Assembly by-election is set for April 9, and all arrangements for smooth voting have been completed, said District Election Officer Sangappa at a press conference on Monday at the District Collector's Hall.

A total of 2,59,797 voters are eligible to cast their votes, including 1,26,999 men, 1,32,775 women, and 23 others. Among them, 385 are service voters, 170 have postal ballots, and 90 are persons with disabilities. For the election, 322 polling booths have been set up, each staffed by one presiding officer and three polling officers. A total of 1,564 personnel, including additional staff, micro observers, and armed police, will oversee the polling process. Webcasting arrangements have been made for all booths.

Special booths have been established for youth, persons with disabilities, and theme-based polling to encourage maximum participation. A mustering center has been set up at the Government First Grade College in Sector No. 43 of Navanagar.

In strict enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct, trading in liquor shops within 10 km of the constituency has been suspended until midnight on April 9. Authorities have seized cash worth Rs. 94.03 lakh, liquor worth Rs. 39.73 lakh, 14,637 liters of liquor, 194 liters of illegal liquor, nine vehicles, and sarees worth Rs. 1.20 lakh since the code came into effect.

Open campaigning will be banned from 6 pm on April 7. Political workers brought from outside the constituency must leave, and only five people per candidate can conduct door-to-door campaigns in the final period. Fairs, rallies, loudspeakers, vehicles, and other campaign activities are restricted within 100 meters of polling stations.

Electronic and print media have also been restricted from publishing election-related material or opinion polls 48 hours before voting. Candidates and organizations must obtain prior approval for any advertisements on April 8 and 9.

Sangappa reminded everyone that the 48-hour pre-voting period is a time for fair play, free from activities that could create tension between communities. The Election Department urged citizens to participate peacefully and exercise their right to vote on April 9.

Prohibitory orders issued around SSLC centers

MANDYA

Authorities in Mandya have issued a prohibitory order around six SSLC 2026 Annual Examination-01 evaluation centers starting April 8. The move aims to ensure smooth and uninterrupted evaluation work. The District Collector and District Magistrate approved the restriction after a request from the Deputy Director (Administration) of the Public Education Department. The order applies to a 200-meter radius around the evaluation sites until all evaluation work is completed.

The six centers under restriction include Carmel Convent, S.P.P.K. Kallukattada, St. John's High School, St. Joseph's High School, Rotary High School, and Lakshmi Janardhan Balika High School, all in Mandya. Only officers and staff appointed for evaluation will be allowed inside these areas.

Officials stressed that the measure is temporary and necessary to maintain order and prevent any disruptions. Residents and visitors are advised to avoid the restricted zones during the evaluation period to ensure the process runs efficiently.

Lokayukta flags lake encroachments, seeks quick action

BENGALURU

In Kolar taluk, 565 of 566 lakes surveyed, but encroachments persist; Justice Patil warned officials to expedite re-surveys, remove encroachments, and enforce strict compliance

The Lokayukta has raised serious concerns over large-scale encroachments and irregularities in lakes across Kolar district and directed officials to take swift, time-bound action. B S Patil reviewed the status of lake surveys and encroachment clearance during a meeting with revenue and survey officials. He asked them to complete pending work and submit a detailed report before the next hearing.

Officials shared updates from different taluks. In KGF, out of 325 lakes, surveys have been completed for 200, while re-survey work is pending for 46 lakes due to outdated records and fresh encroachments. In Bangarpet, all 377 lakes have been surveyed, and most identified encroachments have either been cleared or issued notices. Srinivaspur reported 617 lakes, many of which have shrunk into smaller water bodies, with several encroachments including residential buildings. In Mulbagal, 803 lakes were identified, with 381 found encroached. In some cases, lake lands were reportedly recorded under private ownership and removed from official records.

In Kolar taluk, 566 lakes were identified, and surveys have been completed for 565, but encroachments still exist in several areas.

The Lokayukta observed that illegal occupation, delays in surveys, and administrative lapses have led to the deterioration of water bodies. Officials cited staff shortages and technical issues for the delays.

Justice Patil warned of strict action if officials fail to comply. He directed authorities to speed up re-surveys, remove encroachments, and ensure proper documentation.

A compliance report has been sought before the next hearing scheduled on May 26, with a warning that costs may be imposed on officials for any delay or negligence in completing the work.

Magadi Basava Jayanti celebrated, Shivakumaraswamiji honoured

MAGADI

Srimalaya Shantamuni Desikedra Shivacharya Mahaswamiji praised Dr. Shivakumaraswamiji during the inauguration of the Rural Basava Jayanti and the 5th anniversary of the Sri Shivakumaraswamiji Community Hall in Gudemaranhalli village. He said that had Dr. Shivakumaraswamiji been born in the Christian faith, he might have received the Nobel Peace Prize for his service, which, he claimed, exceeded that of Mother Teresa.

Shivacharya Mahaswamiji highlighted that Dr. Shivakumaraswamiji worked to please God rather than seek public recognition, and his ideals teach people to lead meaningful lives. The celebration emphasized Basava Jayanti in villages, encouraging everyone to take part in religious and cultural programs. Regular Shivanubhava gatherings on new moon and Ponami days, led by monks of Jagannaiah's Math, were credited with enriching knowledge and spiritual understanding in the community.

Channabasava Swamiji of Gudemaranahalli Jaggannayya Mutt stressed the teachings of Basavanna, advocating for an equal society free from caste and creed discrimination. A historical play by Jagajyothi Basaveshwara Nataka Mandali was performed as part of the festivities. The event saw attendance from MLA Srinivas, Siddalingaswamyji of Thamadihalli Mutt, Veerashaiva Lingayat Seva Trust President Shantaraju, former members Shankarappa and Anasuya Kantaraju, teacher Aaradhya, and many others.

Elephant herd sparks fear, night traffic halted

BELUR

A herd of 28 wild Asian elephants spotted in Bommenahalli has caused fear among residents. The elephants roamed in search of food and later rested near DC garden after drinking water from Gauri Lake. A lone elephant was also seen in Kittavar Estate, adding to panic. Forest Department officials have stopped night movement in the area and are monitoring the situation. Residents have been warned through loudspeakers to avoid venturing out at night for safety.

Teachers key to successful census work, says Commissioner

RAICHUR

Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring the success of census work, said Municipal Corporation Commissioner Zubin Mohopatra during a training workshop held in the city. The programme was organised for supervisors and enumerators at the Government Girls' Pre-University College. He said the census is a national responsibility and a legal duty, urging teachers to actively support the process with dedication.

A total of 434 blocks have been identified in Raichur urban area, with 75 supervisors and 435 enumerators assigned for the task. The house listing survey will begin on April 16 and continue until May 15. The Commissioner explained that proper mapping of areas in the first phase will make the census process easier and more accurate. He added that an online system has been introduced to align the census with modern digital practices.

Highlighting its importance, he said the census, which began in 1872, has now reached its 16th edition and holds special significance as the eighth national census after independence.

Enumerators will collect responses to 33 questions from households. Mohopatra advised them to be patient and polite, especially if people hesitate to share information, and to clearly explain the purpose of the census. Officials including Ravi Angadi, Shalam, Member Secretary Krishna, Nodal Officer Sudarshan, and Master Trainer Saddashivappa attended the event along with several teachers.

The workshop aimed to prepare staff for smooth data collection and ensure accurate results through teamwork and proper training.

Yedrami prepares digital census with full training

YEDRAMI

The 2027 census in Yedrami will be fully digital, and enumerators will undergo training in three stages to ensure accurate and transparent data collection, said Tahsildar Yellappa Subedar on Monday. He spoke while inaugurating a workshop for census enumerators and supervisors at Kanya High School in the town.

The taluk administration has appointed 196 enumerators and 29 supervisors for rural areas. A three-day compulsory training will be held from April 6 to 8 to prepare staff for the census. The actual house listing and housing census will take place from April 16 to May 15 across urban and rural areas. Enumerators and supervisors are already assigned to specific localities.

The administration has warned that strict action will be taken against absentee staff. Under the Census Act of 1948 and the Indian Civil Security Code 2023, non-compliance may lead to FIR registration, suspension, and other disciplinary action.

An automatic online system will allow the public to submit census information conveniently. Tahsildar Yellappa emphasized that proper training will help avoid errors and maintain transparency in data collection.

Census Nodal Officer Raghavendra, Town Panchayat RI Basavaraj, Education Department CRP Mallanagowda, and Prashanth Kunnur were present during the training workshop.

Officials urged all enumerators and supervisors to participate actively and ensure every household is counted accurately.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client by name Sri. Narayana son of Sri. Abbaiah, residing at: Sanjivayyanadoddi Village, Harohalli Hobli, Harohalli Taluk and Bangalore South District, has lost Original Registered Sale Deed dated 18-02-2008, executed by Sri. Thammaiah @ Narasaiah and his family members in favour of Sri. H.C. Shekhar, which is duly registered as Document No. KNK-1-07350/2007-08, CD. No. KNKD-87, Book-1, Registered on 22-02-2008 and Registered at Sub Registrar Office, Kanakapura, while Xerox at Harohalli Town on 03-04-2026. Hence, if anyone found the said document, please intimate the same or handover the same to me or my client.

Contact Address:
Rajini., M.S., B.A., LL.B., Advocate., 1st Floor, Society Building, PLD Bank Road, Opposite Old Bus Stop, Ramanagara Town-562159.
Mob: 8884242935.
Place: Ramanagara.
Date: 24-03-2026.

BEFORE THE COURT OF PRL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, BANGALORE RURAL, AT DODDABALLAPUR
Criminal Misc. Petition No. 147/2024
BETWEEN: Smt Gangamma W/o Mariyappa, Aged about 38 years, Hambalager Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapur Taluk. ..... Petitioners
AND The Registrar of Birth and Deaths, CMC .... Respondent
PAPER PUBLICATION/PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that a petition has been made on this court under section 13 (3) of the registration of birth and deaths act 1969, r/w rule 9 (3) of Karnataka registration of birth and deaths act 1999. For the death certificate of petitioner's mother Smt Muniyamma died on 15/02/2020.
Be it known that no cavaet has been and the said petitioner is posted for hearing on 14/5/2026 at 11'0 Clock any Person/s claiming to have any interest may some and participate in the proceedings before the grant death certificate.
Given under my hand and seal of the court, this the day of 06.04.2026
By Order of the Court
Shirstedar, COURT OF THE IND ADOTTONAL CIVIL JUDGE AT DODDABALLAPUR
Advocate for Petitioners: **VASUDHA B S**, Advocate, #933/1262. Kuchappapet, Doddaballapur

BEFORE THE COURT OF PRL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, BANGALORE RURAL, AT DODDABALLAPUR
Criminal Misc. Petition No. 1186/2025
BETWEEN : Sri ANANTHAMURTHY B C S/o Late Chayappa, R/at # 933/1262, Kuchappapet, Doddaballapur Town ...Petitioners
And : The Registrar of Birth and Deaths, CMC ....Respondent
PAPER PUBLICATION/PUBLIC NOTICE
WHEREAS, the above named Petitioners has filed the petition U/S 13(3) of Birth and Deaths Registration Act, for issue of death certificate of Deceased, who is the deceased is the Wife of the petitioners named as Sowbhagya BC W/o Ananthamurhty B C as she was died 05/06/2012Doddaballapur Town. The same is required for documentation and future use. Any person interested in this matter, may appear before above court at 11a.m on. 29.5 26 to which date the case is posted for hearing, before the Hon'ble Court IInd Additional Civil Judge at Doddaballapur.
Given under my hand and seal of the court, this the day of 06.04.2026
By Order of the Court : Sheristhedar
COURT OF THE IIND ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AT DODDABALLAPUR
Advocate for Petitioners : D.M. RENUKAMURTHY, Advocate, Office No.29 & 30, PLD Bank Building Taluk Office Road, Doddaballapur Town-561203

CHANGE OF NAME
I, DIMPLE THAPA D/o AJIT THAPA, R/o No 1, Flat F04, Kenchappa Road, Frazer Town, Pulakeshinagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560005, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I have embraced ISLAM and renounced HINDUISM with effect from 31.01.2024. I also changed my name from DIMPLE THAPA to HAYAT SYEDA.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, LAKSHMINARASIMHASWAMY C S/o CHIKKEGOWDA R/o 44, Somedevanahalli, Magadi, Ramanagar, Karnataka-562127, have changed the name of my minor son SUPREETH GOWDA L aged 7 years and he shall hereafter be known as RISHABH.

CHANGE OF NAME
Veeresh S/o Shivamadaiah, residing at: Doddagangavadi Village and Post, Kootagal Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bangaluru South District. Have changed my name VEERESH to VEERESH S. for all future purposes as per Affidavit sworn before M. C. Devendra, Notory, Ramanagara. dated: 06-04-2026 All my transaction will be held in the Name of VEERESH S. only.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL CIVIL JUDGE AND J,M,F,C AT DODDABALLAPURA
CRL.MIS,NO. 124/2026
Petitioner : Smt Anitha.G W/o Late Punith, Aged about 31 Years, R/t #46 Durgenahalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk
V/s
Respondent : The Tahashildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore rural District
DRAFT PAPER PUBLICATION
The petitioner has filed a petitioner for grant of death certificate of Sri Punith S/o late Muniraju Was died on -09.06.2020 at her house i.e,
Durgenahalli, Village Tubagere hobli, Doddaballapura taluk, Bangalore rural dristic As the Petitioner is wife of the Decesed Punith.
If any person has right intrest may appear before this Hon'ble court on at Doddaballapura 11.5.2026 at 11:00 AM in person or through pleader to file your objections if any.
Take Notice that in default in your appearance of the date before/above mention in the Notice it will be heard and determine ex-party.
Given under by hand seal of the on the day of 2.4.2026.
By Order of the Court
Sheristhedar
Additional Civil Judge & J.M.F.C At Doddaballapura
Advocate for service : Sri Harish,K, Advocate

NAME CHANGE
I, **MOHAMMED ASGAR AKBAR**, S/o. Mohammed Akbar, Resident of No.806, 2nd Cross, Avalappa Block, Chamundinagar, R T Nagar, Bengaluru-560032, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED ASGAR**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 06.04.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, AKESHA R S/o RANGAPPA D R/o 1108, 42nd Cross, Kumaraswamy Layout, Bangalore South, J P Nagar, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka-560078, have changed the name of my minor son HARSHA A aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as HARIPRASAD A.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, VISHWANATH MUNAVALLI S/o BABURAO SIDALINGAPPA MUNAVALLI, R/o 415, A Block, Brocade Vista Apartment, Gattigere, Near Baleyele Narasimha Temple, RajaRajeshwari Nagara, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VISHWANATH BABURAO MUNAVALLI.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, RAVI MADHVA VAIDYA S/o MADHVA S VAIDYA, R/o E608, Pridespring Fields Apartments, Gubbalal Main Road, Vasanthapura, Subramanyapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560061, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAVINDRA MADHVA VAIDYA.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, LAKSHMINARASIMHASWAMY C S/o CHIKKEGOWDA R/o 44, Somedevanahalli, Magadi, Ramanagar, Karnataka-562127, have changed the name of my minor son MITHUN GOWDA L aged 10 years and he shall hereafter be known as ADVIK.

NAME CHANGE
I, **NARASIMHA RAJU S**, Resident of No. 20, Parvi Golden Nest, 2nd B Main Road, Nagarabhavi Main Road, Bengaluru -560072, Karnataka, have changed my name to **NARASIMHA RAJU SOSTALLI RAMAKRISHNAIAH**, vide affidavit dated: 02.04.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE
I, **SRINIVAS SONNENAHALLI HANUMANTHAPPA**, Resident of No. 12/3, Sonnenahalli, 3rd Block, Ullal Upanagara Post, SMV Layout, Bengaluru -560056, Karnataka, have changed my name to **SRINIVAS HANUMANTHAPPA**, vide affidavit dated: 02.04.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE
I, **RADHA NAGAPPA**, Resident of No. 12/3, Sonnenahalli, 3rd Block, Ullal Upanagara Post, SMV Layout, Bengaluru -560056, Karnataka, have changed my name to **RADHA MANI NAGAIAH**, vide affidavit dated: 02.04.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE
I, **HANUMANTHE GOWDA SONNENAHALLI SRINIVAS**, Resident of No. 12/3, Sonnenahalli, 3rd Block, Ullal Upanagara Post, SMV Layout, Bengaluru -560056, Karnataka, have changed my name to **VINU SRINIVAS**, vide affidavit dated: 02.04.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, LAKSHMAMMA W/o LATE NARAYANA A M, R/o 56, 2nd Main Road, Gayathri Layout, Ramasandra, Kengeri Hobli, Sulikere Post, Kengeri, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka-560060, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BHADRAMMA.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT DODDABALLAPUR
C.MISC NO.1060/2025
Petitioner: Sri. Hanumantharayappa S/o Late. Rangappa @ Chikkarangaiah, Aged about 80 years, R/at Hanabe village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Dodda ballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and Death The Tahsildar, Doddaballapura Taluk.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 13(3) and (14) of the Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of his mother by name Muniyamma W/O Rangappa @ Chikkarangaiah who died on 31.08.2002 at Hanabe Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 04.05.2026, at 11-00 AM. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 6th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministeral Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Sri. Harish.H.G, Advocate, Opp to court Road, Rojipura, Doddaballapura Town-561203

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT DODDABALLAPUR
C.MISC NO.1061/2025
Petitioner: Sri. Umesh.H.M. S/o Late. Muttanna.V. Aged about 56 years, R/at Shetty halli main road, Janatha calony, Tumakuru. V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and Death The Tahsildar, Doddaballapura Taluk.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 13(3) and (14) of the Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of his father by name Muttanna S/o Venkatamuttanna who died on 08-07-1996 at Hanabe Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 04.05.2026, at 11-00 AM. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 6th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministeral Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Sri. Harish.H.G, Advocate, Opp to court Road, Rojipura, Doddaballapura Town-561203

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT DODDABALLAPUR
C.MISC NO.1058/2025
Petitioner: Sri. Hanumantharayappa S/o Late. Rangappa @ Chikkarangaiah, Aged about 80 years, R/at Hanabe village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Dodda ballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and Death The Tahsildar, Doddaballapura Taluk.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 13(3) and (14) of the Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of his father by name Rangappa @ Chikkarangaiah S/o. Thimmadasappa who died on 18-08-1964 at Hanabe Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 04.05.2026, at 11-00 AM. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 6th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministeral Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Sri. Harish.H.G, Advocate, Opp to court Road, Rojipura, Doddaballapura Town-561203

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QUICK READ

AP CM hails capture of 2 rogue elephants after fatal attacks

ITANAGAR

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Monday lauded forest officials and wildlife experts for the successful tranquilization and capture of two rogue elephants following a prolonged period of fear that led to the loss of at least seven human lives. Officials from the Arunachal Pradesh Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department, in collaboration with counterparts from the Karnataka government, carried out the operation to capture the elephants. The animals had been responsible for multiple human deaths and widespread damage to crops, property, and other assets in Tirap and Lohit districts.

Nation first for BJP while it's family first for Cong: Modi

GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday took a veiled swipe at the Gandhi family while addressing a public rally in Assam's Hojai, accusing the Congress party of prioritising dynastic interests over public welfare. Without naming individuals directly, PM Modi criticised Congress for what he described as its family-first approach, contrasting it with the BJP's focus on development and governance. Taking an indirect jibe at the Nehru-Gandhi family, he said the party remains preoccupied with serving a shahi parivar (royal family) in Delhi, while in Assam too, its leadership revolves around a single family.

Sunetra Pawar files nomination for Baramati bypoll

BARAMATI

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and NCP national president Sunetra Pawar on Monday filed her nomination for the Baramati Assembly by-election, describing the contest as a mission to fulfil the unfinished dreams of her late husband and veteran leader Ajit Pawar. The seat fell vacant following the tragic demise of Ajit Pawar in a plane crash earlier this year. Accompanied by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule, her sons Parth and Jay and a host of NCP leaders including Praful Patel, Chhagan Bhujbal, Sunil Tatkare, Dilip Walse Patil among others, Sunetra Pawar struck a somber yet determined tone, framing the election not as a political contest, but as a mission to fulfil Ajit Dada's unfinished dreams.

KHAWAJA ASIF'S KOLKATA REMARK UNDER SCANNER

Indian security agencies have upped vigilance following a controversial remark Pak Df Min that any false flag op by India could trigger retaliation extending to Kolkata.

NEW DELHI

India's security agencies have intensified their vigilance following a controversial statement by Pakistan's Defence Minister, Khawaja Asif, who warned that any alleged false flag operation by India could trigger retaliation extending to Kolkata.

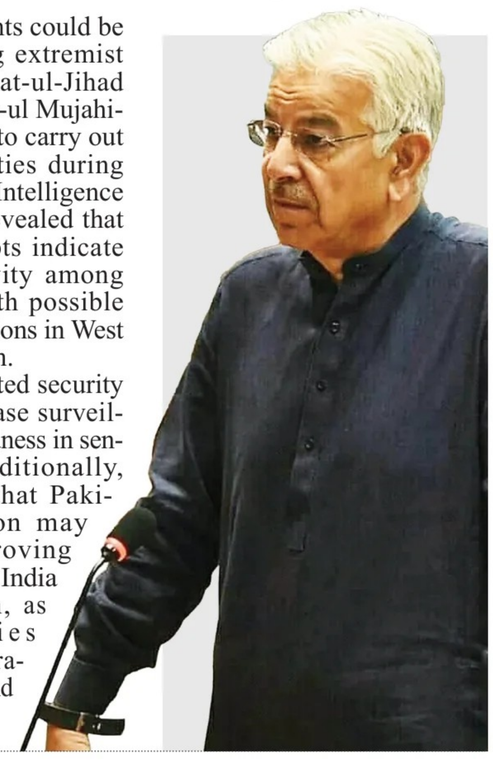
Officials in India have described the statement as provocative and indicative of an attempt to shift narratives by portraying India as a potential aggressor.

A false flag operation, often defined as a covert act designed to appear as though it was conducted by another party, is typically used to justify retaliation or sway public opinion. Experts believe that Asif's remarks are aimed at preemptively shaping global perception while reinforcing Pakistan's defensive stance.

A senior Indian official reiterated that New Delhi's position on cross-border threats remains firm and unchanged. According to the official, any act of aggression or terror linked to Pakistan would be treated as an act of war. The official pointed to India's previous response during Operation Sindoor as an example of how the country would retaliate against any misadventure. He further emphasized that dialogue between the two nations would only be possible once Pakistan dismantles its terror infrastructure.

Another official highlighted that the mention of Kolkata must be viewed in the context of the ongoing electoral process in West Bengal. Intelligence assessments suggest that such statements could be aimed at inciting extremist groups like Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami and Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh to carry out disruptive activities during the elections. An Intelligence Bureau official revealed that multiple intercepts indicate heightened activity among these groups, with possible plans to target regions in West Bengal and Assam.

This has prompted security agencies to increase surveillance and preparedness in sensitive areas. Additionally, officials noted that Pakistan's frustration may stem from improving relations between India and Bangladesh, as both countries strengthen cooperation in economic and security sectors.



Raje highlights ideology, legacy of BJP founding figures

JAIPUR

On the occasion of the 47th Foundation Day of the BJP, Rajasthan ex-CM Vasundhara Raje shared a message reflecting on the party's ideological roots and the sacrifices of its founding leaders.

On the occasion of the 47th Foundation Day of the Bharatiya Janata Party, senior leader and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje shared a message reflecting on the party's ideological roots and the sacrifices of its founding figures.

In her message, Raje recalled the contributions of prominent leaders such as Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Deendayal Upadhyaya, and Vijayaraje Scindia, stating that their sacrifices continue to inspire generations of party workers.

She also acknowledged stalwarts like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani, noting that their legacy is not merely a chapter in history but a solemn responsibility for those carrying forward the party's mission.

Emphasising the guiding principle of Nation First, Party Next, Self Last, she paid tribute to leaders whose vision and dedication laid the foundation of the party.

Raje stressed that politics, in its truest sense, is about service to society. She highlighted that uplifting every section of the population and striving to position India as a global leader remain central to the party's vision. In a message shared on social media, she extended greetings to citizens and party workers, describing the day as a tribute to millions of dedicated individuals who have served the nation selflessly without expectations.

She also underlined the importance of the philosophy of Antyodaya, which focuses on the upliftment of the last person in society, as a core principle guiding the party's policies and actions. According to her, the lives and teachings of the party's founding leaders serve as a constant reminder that national service is the highest duty.

Meanwhile, celebrations were held at the party's state office in Jaipur, where Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma and State President Madan Rathore inaugurated the event by hoisting the party flag.

FIR against TMC-linked BLO member over stir outside CEO office

KOLKATA

The Kolkata Police has registered a First Information Report (FIR) against a female member of the Trinamool Congress-backed BLO Rights Protection Committee for staging a protest outside the office of the State Chief Electoral Officer in Kolkata, officials confirmed on Monday.

According to police officials, the accused, identified as Booth Level Officer Tanushree Modak Bhattacharya, has been served a notice directing her to appear at the Hare Street police station within three days of receiving it. Authorities have instructed her to fully cooperate with the investigation and submit all relevant documents. The notice also cautions her against engaging in similar protest activities, destroying evidence, or attempting to obstruct the probe, warning that non-compliance could lead to arrest. The action follows directives from the Election Commission of India amid ongoing tensions linked to election-related duties in West Bengal.

The FIR is believed to have been filed based on instructions issued by the Election Commission, which has been closely monitoring developments surrounding protests by a section of Booth Level Officers aligned with the Trinamool Congress. These protests began shortly after the launch of the Special Intensive Revision process in West Bengal in November last year.

Members of the BLO Rights Protection Committee had organised a sit-in demonstration outside the CEO's office, alleging excessive workload and claiming that several BLOs had taken extreme steps due to mounting work pressure. The protest highlighted growing dissatisfaction among field-level election staff responsible for carrying out electoral roll revisions.

Officials noted that this marks the first instance of an FIR being filed against a female Booth Level Officer in connection with such demonstrations outside the CEO's office, indicating a significant escalation in the administration's response.

Tensions had previously flared on February 24 when Suvendu Adhikari, Leader of the Opposition in West Bengal, visited the CEO's office and raised slogans. The situation escalated further as supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party gathered at the location, resulting in unrest in the area.

In the aftermath of that incident, Bhattacharya had filed a complaint against BJP supporters, accusing them of misconduct. However, in a reversal of circumstances, the latest FIR has now been lodged against her in connection with the protest gathering, underscoring the increasingly charged political atmosphere surrounding election-related activities in the state.

India-Japan science & tech ties one of strong pillars: Singh

NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh delivered a virtual address at the grand finale of the India-Japan Year of Science, Technology and Innovation Exchange, held at the Embassy of India in Tokyo on Monday. Opening his address, Singh greeted attendees and expressed his pleasure at being part of the significant occasion. He emphasised that cooperation between the two nations in science and technology has grown into one of the strongest pillars of their bilateral relationship. The event marked 40 years of collaboration, reflecting sustained efforts to deepen ties in research, innovation, and technological advancement. The minister highlighted four decades of strong bilateral cooperation between India and Japan, describing it as a cornerstone of international scientific engagement.

12 hurt in Indore lift crash at wedding function

INDORE

Twelve members of a family who were injured in a lift crash during a wedding celebration in Indore are now reported to be out of danger, police said on Monday.

The incident, which occurred in the Chandan Nagar area, has raised serious concerns about safety violations and negligence after an overloaded lift in a factory building collapsed. According to police officials, the mishap took place on Sunday when the victims had gathered at a factory premises in the Rajkumar Bank locality for a wedding function.

The group had gone to the second floor to meet the bride and were returning when around 12 people boarded a lift simultaneously.

Due to excessive load, the lift suddenly snapped and fell, leading to panic and chaos at the venue.

Most of the injured were women and children, all of whom sustained leg injuries in the crash. They were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital, where they are currently undergoing treatment. Authorities confirmed that all injured individuals are stable, although some remain under observation for possible fractures.

Police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against the event organiser, and a detailed investigation is underway. Preliminary findings suggest gross negligence, as the lift involved was meant strictly for transporting goods and not passengers. Despite this, it was reportedly being used regularly to ferry guests during the wedding function.

A senior officer from the Chandan Nagar police station stated that overloading was the immediate cause of the accident, but the deeper issue appears to be a blatant disregard for safety norms.

SMASHING RECORDS

UPI payments surge 33% to 228.5 bn transactions in 2025

NEW DELHI

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed 228.5 billion transactions in 2025, marking a 33% year on year increase, while total transaction value touched Rs. 299.74 trillion, a report said on Monday.

The report from Worldline said that UPI's growth was broad based, with both person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions rising, with the latter recording a 34% growth to 143.82 billion transactions.

The overall average ticket size for UPI fell 9 per cent to Rs. 1,314, while merchant payments' average ticket size dropped to Rs. 592, reflecting the digitisation of small-ticket purchases.

Reduction in ticket size signals the migration of previously cash-driven transactions from street vendors to local services into the digital economy, the report said.

Merchant acceptance infrastructure expanded in 2025, with UPI QR codes increasing 15 per cent YoY to 731.38 million.

Point of sale terminals grew 15 per cent to 11.48 million. Bharat QR deployments eased slightly as the ecosystem consolidated around UPI-led acceptance models, the report said.

India's digital payments ecosystem is entering a new phase of maturity, where scale is being complemented by structure, Worldline India Chief Executive Officer Ramesh Narasimhan said.

The report revealed a maturing payments landscape where multiple payment rails UPI, cards, and recurring payment platforms such as Bharat BillPay — are increasingly working in complementary roles to power a fully digital economy.

India's merchant ecosystem is increasingly becoming QR-first, PoS-as-needed, enabling even the smallest merchants to accept digital payments with minimal infrastructure.

Credit card transactions increased 27 per cent to 5.69 billion, and debit card volumes eased 23 per cent, reflecting the migration of small-value transactions to UPI. Online credit card payments reached Rs. 14.53 trillion.

Recurring digital payments are growing rapidly as households move towards automated bill management with payments on Bharat BillPay touching 3.05 billion and value at Rs. 14.84 trillion, up 40 per cent and 93 per cent respectively.

The platform is seeing strong adoption across categories such as education fees, insurance payments, EMI repayments, and subscription services, signalling the rise of a set-and-forget digital payments model, the report said.

Government of Karnataka
Karnataka Forest Department
Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests
Hunsur Wildlife Sub-Division, Hunsur
Ph : 08222-252041
E-mail–acfhunsurwlsd2020@gmail.com
No:ACF/HWLS/RB/Tender/CR-16/2025-26
Dated : 25/03/2026

Tender Notification

E-Tenders for the works in Hunsur Wildlife Range of Hunsur Wildlife Sub-Division for the year **2025-26** are invited through e-procurement portal (http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka from competent firms for the following works subjected to **KW-4** terms and conditions.

Description of Work	Quantity	Amount (Rs. In Lakhs)
Erection of railway barricade work including procurement of used rails	6.75 Km (1 Units)	964.49

(*Subject to release of funds from Govt.)
Last date of receipt of tender through e-portal : **27.04.2026 upto 16:00 hrs.** If no contractors participate **on 27/04/2026;** re-tender will held on **05.05.2026** upto **16:00 hrs.** No further notification will be published regarding Re-Tender. For more information contact the under signed office on working hours.
Phone : 08222-252041
Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, Hunsur Wildlife Sub-Division, Hunsur
DIPR/DDMYS/015/KSMCA/013/2025-26

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(Government of karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer, Yettinahole Project Division No 4,
Madhugiri. Tumkur Dist-572132, Ph: 08137- 282112
E-mail: eeyetmadhugiri4@gmail.com
NO:EE/VJNL/YHP/Div-No.4/Madhugiri/NIT-15&16/2025-26 Date: 02.04.2026

Tender Notification (Through KPP-Portal)

On Behalf of Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigama Limited, Bangalore the Executive Engineer, VJNL, Yettinahole Project Division No.4, Madhugiri, Karnataka invites two tender document system for 05 works of Nelamangala Constituency and 02 works of K.G.F Constituency, total of 07 works amount Rs.253.39 Lakhs to Rs.418.23 Lakhs on "Percentage basis" through KPP-Portal. The contractor's can download and submit the completed bid documents through e-procurement website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 06.04.2026 to 16.04.2026 upto 5.30 PM, tenders shall be submitted through KPP-Portal only. Details for EMD amount, Tender Processing fee, Tender Clarifications, Qualification of bidders, Tender Conditions etc., may be obtained through KPP-Portal.
The queries if any may be clarified from this office up to 10.04.2026, at 3.00 PM. The bid will be opened on 18.04.2026, at 11.00 AM in office of the Executive Engineer, VJNL, YHP Division No.04, Madhugiri The undersigned reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons.
Sd/-Executive Engineer,
V.J.N.L, YHP Division No.4, Madhugiri.
DIPR/TUM/13/KSMCA/2026-27

QUICK READ

BJP celebrates 47th Foundation Day with leaders

PATNA

The Bharatiya Janata Party celebrated its 47th Foundation Day in Patna with enthusiasm and participation from senior state leaders and party workers. The event highlighted the party's ideological journey, organisational strength, and commitment to national service. The celebrations in Patna witnessed the presence of prominent state leaders, office-bearers, and a large number of party workers, who gathered to mark the occasion with pride and unity. The programme began with the hoisting of the party flag, followed by tributes to the founding leaders who laid the ideological foundation of the organisation. Leaders recalled the contributions of visionaries such as Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Deendayal Upadhyaya, whose principles continue to guide the party's policies and governance approach.

CAG report flags alarming decline of lakes in J&K

JAMMU

A recent report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has revealed a worrying environmental trend in Jammu and Kashmir, stating that 518 out of 697 lakes in the region have either disappeared or shrunk significantly. The findings have raised serious concerns about ecological degradation and water resource management. According to the report, the rapid decline of lakes across Jammu and Kashmir is attributed to a combination of factors including encroachment, urban expansion, pollution, and lack of effective conservation measures. The shrinking water bodies not only threaten biodiversity but also impact the livelihoods of communities dependent on these ecosystems. The audit highlights that many lakes have suffered due to unregulated construction activities and encroachments, which have reduced their size over time.

'Cong failed to pass Women's Reservation Bill during UPA rule'

PANCHKULA

Bharatiya Janata Party MP Rekha Sharma has criticised the Congress for failing to enact the long-pending Women's Reservation Bill during the tenure of the United Progressive Alliance government. Her remarks come amid renewed political debate over women's representation in legislative bodies. Rekha Sharma stated that despite being in power for two consecutive terms, the Congress-led UPA government did not succeed in passing the Women's Reservation Bill, which aims to provide 33 percent reservation for women in Parliament and state legislatures. She argued that the failure reflected a lack of political will on the part of the Congress leadership.

Democracy thrives on collective leadership: Rahul

Senior Cong leader Rahul launched a sharp attack on Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, stating that no individual is uniquely capable of governing the state.

THRISSUR

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi launched a sharp attack on Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, stating that no individual is uniquely capable of governing the state.

He argued that portraying oneself as the sole capable leader undermines the intelligence and dignity of the people of Kerala. He said such messaging reflects political arrogance and diminishes the contributions of other leaders, particularly within the Left Democratic Front.

According to him, democratic leadership must be inclusive and grounded in humility rather than personality-driven narratives. Addressing a campaign rally in Thrissur, he emphasised that Kerala has many capable leaders defined by humility and empathy, and warned against projecting any one leader as indispensable.

Escalating his criticism, Gandhi alleged that the political contest in Kerala is not a traditional bipolar fight. Instead, he claimed there is a tacit understanding between the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Left Democratic Front, positioning the Congress-led United Democratic Front as the only genuine opposition force in the state.

'Why Modi silent on Sabarimala gold smuggling'

He also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, questioning his silence on the alleged Sabarimala gold smuggling issue during visits to Kerala. Gandhi noted that while Modi frequently invokes religious themes in his speeches, his lack of comment on this issue raises questions. He suggested that such selective silence could indicate an attempt to shield or indirectly support the Left leadership.

Further, Gandhi claimed that while he has faced action from central agencies for criticising the Prime Minister, no similar scrutiny appears to affect Vijayan or his family. He said this disparity strengthens the perception of an understanding between the BJP and Left leadership.

Criticising Vijayan's campaign style, Gandhi pointed to the widespread display of posters across Kerala prominently featuring the Chief Minister. He argued that this creates an impression of centralised leadership, which he compared to governance styles associated with leaders like Amit Shah and Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Concluding his remarks, Gandhi stressed that democracy thrives on collective leadership and respect for institutions. He warned that any attempt to project supremacy by a single individual weakens institutional balance and undermines public dignity.

Ind candidates raises potential bogus voting in Payyannur

PAYYANNUR

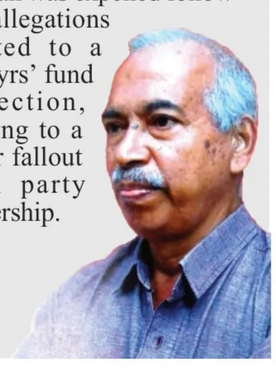
Independent candidate V Kunjikrishnan, once a prominent functionary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has filed a formal complaint with election authorities alleging large-scale irregularities in the electoral roll.

He claimed that names of deceased individuals and those no longer residing in the constituency continue to appear on the voters' list, raising concerns over potential bogus voting. The developments have intensified the spotlight on the constituency, reflecting broader shifts in the state's political landscape.

In his complaint to the District Election Officer, Kunjikrishnan pointed to alleged lapses by Booth Level Officers, accusing them of failing to remove ineligible names. He further alleged that some officials, influenced by Left sympathies, may have enabled the continuation of such names, thereby facilitating fraudulent practices. The complaint also highlighted the alleged creation of fake voter identity cards at illegal centres operating in and around Payyannur.

He stated that he had compiled a list of questionable entries before submitting his complaint and warned that he would approach the courts if votes were found to have been cast in the names of deceased or absent individuals. Stressing the importance of electoral integrity, he called for ensuring a free and fair voting process.

The political significance of his candidature has added further intrigue to the contest. Once part of the CPI(M)'s influential Kannur district committee, Kunjikrishnan was expelled following allegations related to a martyrs' fund collection, leading to a bitter fallout with party leadership.



Poll panel tightens rules on political ads in print

NEW DELHI

As per the new directives, no political party, candidate, organisation, or individual will be permitted to publish political advertisements in print media on the day of polling or one day prior without MCMC approval.

The Election Commission of India on Monday released detailed guidelines on the pre-certification of political advertisements in print media for upcoming Assembly elections and bye-elections, aiming to ensure a level playing field and a free, fair campaign environment across poll-bound states.

As per the new directives, no political party, candidate, organisation, or individual will be permitted to publish political advertisements in print media on the day of polling or one day prior without prior approval from the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC). The move is part of the Commission's broader strategy to curb misinformation and regulate campaign content during sensitive periods.

The Commission clarified that candidates and other applicants must approach the District-level MCMC for certification, while recognised political parties headquartered in a state or union territory can apply to the State-level MCMC. All applications must be submitted at least two days before the intended date of publication to allow sufficient time for scrutiny and approval. The guidelines come in the wake of the election schedule announced on March 15 for Assembly polls in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, along with bye-elections in six states. According to the schedule, polling in Assam, Kerala, and Puducherry will be held on April 9, making pre-certification mandatory for advertisements published on April 8 and 9.

For Tamil Nadu, which will go to the polls on April 23, advertisements appearing on April 22 and 23 will require prior approval. In West Bengal, where elections will be conducted in two phases on April 23 and April 29, pre-certification will be required on April 22 and 23 for the first phase, and April 28 and 29 for the second phase.

To ensure effective implementation, MCMCs at both state and district levels have been activated to examine advertisement content and grant timely approvals. These committees have also been tasked with closely monitoring instances of paid news and taking strict action against violations.

Meanwhile, the Commission highlighted significant enforcement measures already underway in poll-bound states. On April 5, it reported that agencies have seized illegal cash, liquor, drugs, precious metals, and freebies worth over Rs 650 crore. A total seizure of Rs 651.51 crore has been recorded since the activation of the Electronic Seizure Management System on February 26.

Excise case: CBI opposes Kejriwal's plea for Justice recusal

NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Monday opposed an application filed by former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the Delhi High Court, seeking the recusal of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma from hearing an appeal related to the Delhi excise policy case.

The agency described the development as a serious matter with wider implications.

During the proceedings, the CBI strongly objected to Kejriwal's request, which sought to prevent Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma from hearing the agency's appeal against a trial court order that had discharged him and 22 others in the alleged excise policy irregularities case.

The investigating agency argued that such a plea raises significant concerns, particularly given the sensitive nature of the case and its impact on public institutions.

The Delhi excise policy case has been at the centre of political and legal debates, involving allegations of irregularities in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped policy. The trial court had earlier discharged Kejriwal and several other accused, prompting the CBI to challenge the decision before the High Court.

Kejriwal's application for recusal sought to have the matter reassigned to a different judge, though the specific grounds for the request have been a subject of legal scrutiny. The CBI, however, maintained that there was no valid justification for such a move and stressed that allowing such pleas without sufficient grounds could set an undesirable precedent in judicial proceedings.

Describing the situation as something serious, the agency highlighted that such developments could affect the integrity and continuity of judicial processes, especially in high-profile cases. Legal experts suggest that recusal requests are generally considered carefully by courts, balancing the need for fairness with the risk of forum shopping or unnecessary delays.

The High Court is expected to examine the merits of the plea and the objections raised by the CBI before taking a final decision on whether the case should continue before the same bench.

The outcome of this development could have significant implications for the ongoing legal battle surrounding the Delhi excise policy case and its broader political ramifications.

Dhami thanks Centre for approving KV for Tehri Garhwal

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Monday expressed gratitude to the Central Government for approving the establishment of a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Madannegi, district Tehri Garhwal.

The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has granted approval for setting up the new school, which will begin operations in the civil sector from the academic session 2026-27, according to a press release from the Chief Minister's office.

The Chief Minister stated that the opening of a Kendriya Vidyalaya will provide quality education to children in Madannegi and nearby areas, while also strengthening the local educational infrastructure. He added that both the Central and State Governments are committed to advancing youth in the field of education and shaping their future, the release stated.

As per the release, in the initial phase, the new Kendriya Vidyalaya will start with classes 1 to 5, with one section in each class. Based on need and approval, it will be gradually expanded in the coming years. The admission process will begin within 30 days after the completion of all necessary formalities. It is noteworthy that this decision has been taken in line with prior approval from the Government of India, under which 85 new Kendriya Vidyalayas are to be established across the country.

The school in Madannegi, Tehri Garhwal, is one of the institutions included in this initiative. Earlier on Saturday, CM Dhami addressed police constables undergoing training at the Police Lines in Dehradun. He emphasised strengthening law and order in the state, playing an active role in disaster management, and ensuring smooth traffic management. He also inaugurated the renovation and restoration of Jugmandar Hall at the Dehradun Municipal Corporation, a project executed at a cost of Rs 2.32 crore as part of efforts to preserve and promote the city's cultural heritage.

Gogoi questions Assam CM's kin on foreign assets

GUWAHATI

A political war of words erupted in Assam on Monday after Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi raised a series of questions targeting Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his family over alleged foreign assets and links, and the CM's wife rejecting the allegations. In a post on X, Gogoi sought answers from the Chief Minister on five specific points, including whether Sarma's wife holds a golden visa for Dubai, whether such a visa is linked to an Indian passport, and whether any member of the Chief Minister's family owns property or runs businesses abroad. He also questioned whether any such assets had been disclosed in Sarma's election affidavit. Himanta Biswa Sarma should welcome an investigation if he has nothing to hide, Gogoi said, escalating the political confrontation between the BJP and the Congress in the poll-bound state.

SETBACK FOR VEDANTA

SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO STAY ADANI'S ₹14,543 CR JAL PLAN

NEW DELHI

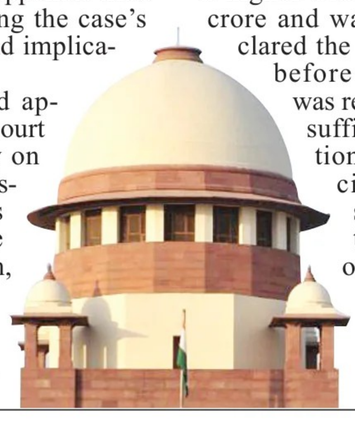
In a setback to Vedanta Group, the Supreme Court of India on Monday declined to stay the implementation of Adani Enterprises' resolution plan for debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates Ltd.

The court observed that the matter is already scheduled for final hearing before the appellate tribunal, making immediate intervention unnecessary.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, along with Justice Joymalya Bagchi, stated that since the insolvency appeals are listed before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal on April 10, there was no justification to halt the process at this stage.

The bench directed the tribunal to take up the matter on an out-of-turn basis and continue hearings, if required, on the following working day.

The apex court further ordered that any significant policy decision by the monitoring committee during the interim period must be taken only after obtaining permission from the appellate tribunal, considering the case's complexity and implications.



Vedanta had approached the court seeking a stay on Adani Enterprises' Rs 14,500-crore resolution plan, alleging a lack of transparency in the insolvency process. The company claimed that it had submitted a higher bid of Rs 16,726 crore and was initially declared the highest bidder before the outcome was reversed without sufficient explanation. It also criticised the decision-making of the Committee of Creditors, calling the approval process unfair and inequitable. However, lenders defended their choice, arguing that under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, resolution plans are not selected solely on the basis of the highest financial offer.

They emphasised that factors such as upfront payment, feasibility, and repayment timelines play a crucial role.

According to lenders, Adani Enterprises' proposal was favoured due to its higher upfront payment of approximately Rs 6,000 crore and a shorter repayment schedule of around two years. They also pointed out that Vedanta's revised bid was submitted after the bidding deadline, making it ineligible without restarting the process.

Earlier, the appellate tribunal had declined to grant interim relief against the approval of Adani Enterprises' plan by the National Company Law Tribunal, allowing the insolvency proceedings to continue while seeking responses from all stakeholders.

QUICK READ

Democrats target Latino voters in South Florida

Miami

Democratic Party leaders see a chance to regain support among Latino voters in South Florida ahead of upcoming elections. Rising living costs and concerns over policies linked to Donald Trump have caused dissatisfaction among some communities. Many voters of Cuban and Venezuelan origin are rethinking their choices, creating an opening for Democrats. However, Republican Party officials say their support remains strong in the region. Both parties are increasing outreach efforts. Analysts say the shift could influence key races, though changing long-standing voting patterns may take time.

Taiwan opposition leader plans China peace visit

Taipei

Cheng Li-wun, leader of Taiwan's main opposition Kuomintang, will visit China from April 7 to 12, aiming to ease tensions. She may meet Xi Jinping during the trip. The visit comes as China increases pressure to support reunification. Taiwan's parliament has delayed a major defence spending plan, raising concerns. The ruling party criticised the trip, warning it could weaken security. Cheng says peace needs dialogue, not just military strength. China still claims Taiwan, but most people there oppose Beijing's rule. Discussions are expected, though major breakthroughs remain unlikely.

Mideast war: Missile strike kills 4 in Haifa city

Haifa

Four people were killed after a missile struck a residential building in Haifa, according to Israeli officials. Local media reported the attack was linked to Iran amid ongoing tensions. Rescue teams worked for hours to recover bodies trapped under the rubble. The Israeli military confirmed the deaths on Monday after search efforts ended. Officials said the strike caused heavy damage and panic in the area. The incident comes as conflict in the region continues, raising fears of further violence and civilian casualties in coming days.

India-Qatar call for talks to ease Mideast tensions

The appeal came during a phone call between Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani and India's EAM S Jaishankar

DOHA

India and Qatar have called for urgent talks to reduce rising tensions in West Asia and protect global energy supplies.

The appeal came during a phone call between Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani and India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

During the discussion, both leaders expressed concern over recent attacks in the region. They stressed the need to stop what were described as unjustified Iranian attacks on several Gulf countries. They also warned against targeting key facilities linked to water, food, and energy, saying such actions could worsen the crisis.

The two leaders reviewed the growing military tensions and their impact on regional and global peace. They agreed that dialogue is the only way forward and called for all sides to return to negotiations. Ensuring safe and free movement of ships, especially in sensitive areas, was also highlighted as a priority.

The talks come at a time when tensions are rising near the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important routes for oil transport. Any disruption in this area could affect energy supplies across the globe.

Both India and Qatar underlined the importance of working together with other nations to reduce tensions. They said strong coordination and peaceful discussions are needed to restore stability.

They also stressed that maintaining peace in the region is essential not only for security but also for protecting the global economy and ensuring steady energy availability.

Prosecutors seek 10-year jail for South Korea ex-prez Yoon

SEOUL

Prosecutors in South Korea have sought a 10-year prison sentence for former President Yoon Suk Yeol in an appeals trial linked to obstruction of justice.

The demand was made during the final hearing at the Seoul High Court by a special counsel team led by Cho Eun-suk. The sentence requested is double the five-year term given by a lower court in January.

Yoon was earlier found guilty of blocking investigators from detaining him during last year's crisis. He was also accused of inviting only selected Cabinet members to discuss his plan to impose martial law in 2024. The court also held him responsible for creating and later discarding a false official document after the order was lifted.

However, he was cleared of charges related to ordering false press statements.

Prosecutors argued that Yoon misused his power as president and harmed the country's constitutional system. They said he tried to use state agencies, including the security service, to avoid detention.

They also noted that he has not apologised and continues to deny wrongdoing.

The court will now hear final arguments from Yoon's lawyers and his own statement before announcing its decision. The ruling is expected before the end of June.

Yoon is currently facing multiple trials related to his short-lived martial law decision, his wife's alleged corruption case, and other issues. In a separate case, he has already been sentenced to life imprisonment for leading an insurrection.

UYGHUR GROUPS PROTEST ABROAD OVER XINJIANG ISSUE

OTTAWA

Members of the East Turkistan Government in Exile and Uyghur community groups held protests across the United States and Canada, demanding global action over what they called an ongoing genocide in Xinjiang, a region in China also known as East Turkistan.

The demonstrations took place in Washington and Edmonton on Sunday to mark the thirty sixth anniversary of the 1990 Baren Uprising, which organisers described as a major moment of resistance against Chinese control in the region.

According to organisers, thousands of Uyghurs protested in Baren Township in 1990 against strict population policies, including claims of forced abortions. They alleged that Chinese forces responded with heavy military action, causing large scale deaths and arrests.

Speakers at the protests said such actions have continued, including mass detention, forced labour, and cultural suppression of Uyghur and other Turkic communities.

Salih Hudayar, a senior ETGE leader, said the struggle is for full independence and not limited reforms. He added that the community remains committed to seeking justice and freedom.

In Canada, Prime Minister Abdulahat Nur urged stronger action, asking governments not to stay silent. Protesters called on the global community to recognise East Turkistan as occupied and impose sanctions while banning goods linked to forced labour.

They also demanded international investigations and accountability, warning that the situation continues to worsen. Organisers said the protests aim to keep global attention on the issue and push for coordinated steps by world leaders to address human rights concerns in the region. Activists said they will continue peaceful demonstrations until their voices are heard and meaningful action is taken by international institutions and governments worldwide in future.

Japan citizens protest plan to ease arms rules

TOKYO

Thousands of citizens and opposition leaders gathered in Tokyo to protest the government's plan to ease restrictions on arms exports and expand military policies, raising concerns about Japan's future direction.

The rally was held near Ikebukuro station on Sunday evening, where more than 6,000 people joined the demonstration, according to organisers. Protesters carried placards with messages such as "Military force cannot bring peace" and raised slogans opposing war and supporting peace.

The protest targeted policies linked to the administration of Sanae Takaichi, which is reportedly planning to revise rules on defence equipment exports. Critics fear that loosening these rules could allow Japan to supply weapons overseas, potentially increasing global tensions.

Opposition leaders at the rally warned that such steps go against Japan's pacifist constitution, which limits the country's role in military conflict. They also expressed concern about other proposals, including stronger security laws and plans to expand intelligence capabilities.

Tomoko Tamura said Japan must not move toward policies that could involve it in international conflicts. She stressed that the country's constitution clearly rejects war and the use of force to settle disputes.

Organisers of the rally said the government's push for military expansion does not reflect public opinion. Many citizens fear that increasing military strength and exporting weapons could lead to greater risks and instability.

One protester said weapons only bring harm and could trigger further conflict, affecting not just Japan but other countries as well. Demonstrators called for peaceful policies and urged the government to respect the nation's long-standing commitment to peace and avoid actions that could lead to future conflicts.

Japan plans Iran talks, coordinates with US

TOKYO

Japan is preparing to hold summit-level talks with Iran as tensions continue in West Asia, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on Monday.

Speaking during a parliamentary session, Takaichi said the government is working to arrange discussions with Iranian leaders at a suitable time. She noted that the decision would depend on Japan's national interest and the overall global situation.

The move comes as concerns grow over the ongoing tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran. Japan has been closely watching developments in the region, which is important for its energy needs.

Takaichi had earlier said she would consider direct talks with Iran if it helps maintain stability. She stressed that timing would be decided carefully after reviewing all factors.

West Asia remains a key region for Japan, as the country depends on it for more than ninety percent of its crude oil imports. Any conflict in the region could affect energy supplies and economic stability.

Last month, Takaichi met Donald Trump at the White House, where the two leaders discussed global security concerns and the situation in West Asia. During the meeting, Takaichi expressed hope for peace and stability, highlighting the need for strong leadership to resolve conflicts.

Trump praised Takaichi's leadership and described the relationship between Japan and the United States as strong and positive.

Japan's efforts to engage with Iran reflect its broader approach to diplomacy, focusing on dialogue and stability. Officials believe that talks could help reduce tensions and support peace in the region.

SU DO KU

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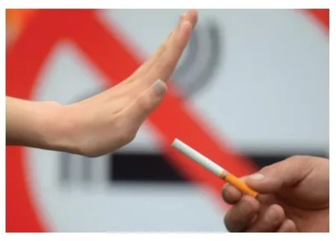
Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Tobacco deaths cross 6K yearly in Laos

VIENTIANE



The country also faces financial damage of over 3.6 billion Lao kip annually due to tobacco-related illnesses

More than 6,000 people die every year in Laos due to diseases linked to tobacco use, causing serious health and economic losses, officials said.

The country also faces financial damage of over 3.6 billion Lao kip annually due to tobacco-related illnesses.

The figures were shared during a meeting of the National Committee for Tobacco Control, led by Health Minister Baykham Khattiya. The meeting reviewed progress made in controlling tobacco use and discussed ongoing challenges.

Officials said enforcing the ban on electronic cigarettes remains difficult. They also pointed to the growing use of new tobacco products and legal hurdles that slow stronger action. Health experts warned that tobacco continues to be a major threat to public health and development.

The minister highlighted that tobacco use leads to serious diseases like heart problems and long-term breathing issues. She said laws alone are not enough and called for stricter enforcement and better coordination among departments.

Last month, the Health Ministry worked with World Health Organization and other partners to hold a national workshop. The aim was to protect health policies from tobacco industry influence and improve enforcement of the e-cigarette ban.

Representatives from several ministries and international experts attended the workshop. They shared ideas and best practices to strengthen tobacco control efforts in the country.

Officials said learning from global experiences will help Laos take stronger steps to reduce tobacco use and protect public health in the coming years.

India-Nepal leaders meet to reset ties

KATHMANDU

India's Ambassador to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, met Nepal's Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal on Monday and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties and cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.

The meeting took place at Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was described as a courtesy call. During the interaction, Ambassador Srivastava conveyed greetings from India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Khanal on his recent appointment.

Officials said the discussion covered a wide range of issues related to Nepal-India relations, including ongoing cooperation and future areas of partnership. Both sides highlighted the importance of maintaining strong diplomatic engagement.

Khanal assumed office after Balendra Shah became Nepal's Prime Minister on March 27. Shah, a young leader and former mayor of Kathmandu, has brought new attention to the country's political leadership.

Earlier, Jaishankar had congratulated Khanal and expressed India's willingness to work closely with him to further deepen the traditional partnership between the two nations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also congratulated Shah and shared his hope of taking bilateral ties to greater heights.

In response, Shah thanked Modi and said he looked forward to strengthening relations for the benefit of both countries' citizens.

India and Nepal share close cultural, religious, and historical connections. India remains Nepal's largest development partner, supporting several major infrastructure and development projects over the years. Both nations continue to focus on mutual growth, cooperation, and regional stability through strong diplomatic relations and ongoing dialogue.

Indonesia's Mount Semeru erupts repeatedly, triggers phyroclastic flow

JAKARTA

Indonesia's Mount Semeru erupted multiple times on Monday morning, sending thick ash clouds up to 1,100 metres into the sky and prompting fresh safety warnings for nearby residents.

Officials from Indonesia's volcanology agency said at least seven eruptions were recorded since midnight. The activity began shortly after midnight, with the strongest eruption observed around early morning when the ash plume reached its highest level.

The ash, which ranged from white to grey, drifted mainly towards the southern areas with moderate intensity. Authorities have advised people to stay alert and avoid danger zones around the volcano.

Residents have been warned not to enter a five-kilometre radius from the crater. In some directions, especially along the Besuk Kobokan river, the restricted zone has been extended up to 13 kilometres due to the risk of flowing volcanic material. Experts also cautioned that hot ash clouds and mudflows could travel even farther during heavy rain.

Mount Semeru has shown frequent activity in recent months. Similar eruptions were reported in February and March, with ash rising up to 1,000 metres and hot clouds moving several kilometres from the crater.

Standing at 3,676 metres, Semeru is the tallest volcano on Java Island and one of Indonesia's most active volcanoes. The country lies on the Pacific Ring of Fire, making it prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely and have urged residents to follow official instructions. The alert level for the volcano remains high, and people living nearby have been asked to stay cautious and prepared for any sudden changes in volcanic activity.

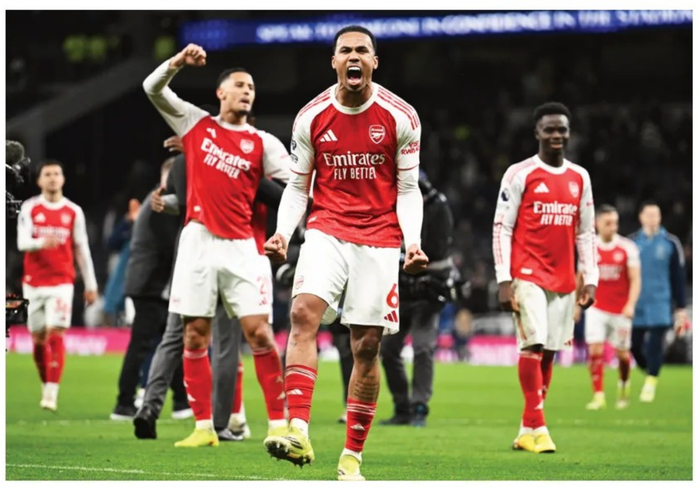
Arsenal face stern Sporting test as Arteta demands strong response

Arteta urges resilience as Arsenal look to bounce back in Europe

LONDON

Arsenal FC manager Mikel Arteta has called on his players to show character and resilience as they prepare for a crucial UEFA Champions League quarter-final clash against Sporting CP following a dip in form.

Arsenal head into Tuesday's encounter in Lisbon on the back of two damaging defeats that have derailed their momentum. A shock FA Cup quarter-final loss to Southampton FC came shortly after a League Cup final defeat to Manchester City, ending their hopes of a historic quadruple.



Despite suffering only their fifth defeat of the season, the back-to-back losses have triggered concern among supporters, with the club still chasing its first major trophy since the 2020 FA Cup. Questions have resurfaced over Arsenal's ability to deliver silverware, especially after three successive runner-up finishes in the Premier League.

Arteta, however, remains confident that his side can overcome this difficult phase. He described the current situation as a natural challenge in a long season and urged his players to respond positively. Emphasising belief and unity, the Spaniard said the team must stand up and deliver in what he termed the most important phase of the campaign.

Arsenal still hold a strong position domestically, maintaining a healthy lead at the top of the league table, while also being considered favourites against Sporting based on their previous dominant display in last season's group stage. The Gunners will look to key players like Viktor Gyokeres, who has found form in recent weeks, to provide the attacking spark. However, injury concerns over Declan Rice, Bukayo Saka and Gabriel Magalhaes could complicate their plans.

Midfielder Christian Norgaard echoed the manager's sentiments, stressing the need for positive body language and focus as the team navigates a demanding schedule.

With the Champions League dream still alive and the Premier League title within reach, Arsenal now face a defining test of their season.

Inter rout Roma to move nine points clear in Serie A race

MILAN

Inter Milan took a decisive step towards the Serie A 2026 title with a commanding 5-2 victory over AS Roma, stretching their lead at the top of the table to nine points. The win marked a strong response from Inter after a brief dip in form, with the return of captain Lautaro Martinez proving pivotal. The Argentine striker scored twice and led from the front in a dominant attacking display at the San Siro.

Martinez inspires Inter as Roma crumble in high-scoring San Siro clash

Inter wasted no time asserting control, as Martinez opened the scoring inside the first minute, finishing off a clever assist from Marcus Thuram. The early goal set the tone for a high-tempo encounter, though Roma briefly fought back through a header from Gianluca Mancini. However, Inter regained the lead just before half-time with a stunning long-range strike from Hakan Calhanoglu, restoring their advantage at a crucial moment. The hosts carried that momentum into the second half, effectively sealing the contest within minutes of the restart.

Martinez added his second goal in the 52nd minute, again benefiting from Thuram's creativity, before the French forward got on the scoresheet himself with a well-placed header. Nicolo Barella then capitalised on poor defending to net Inter's fifth, putting the result beyond doubt.

Roma managed a late consolation through Lorenzo Pellegrini, but it did little to mask a disappointing performance that dented their hopes of securing a Champions League spot. They remain outside the top four, facing an uphill battle in the closing stages of the season.

Inter's emphatic victory not only strengthens their grip on the title race but also sends a strong message to rivals AC Milan and Napoli.

With momentum firmly on their side and key players returning to form, Inter appear well on course to secure their 21st league crown.

Rollins Replaces Injured Mysterio In WrestleMania Clash

LAS VEGAS

A dramatic late change has reshaped one of the marquee matches at WrestleMania 42, as Rey Mysterio has been officially ruled out due to injury. The veteran star, beloved for his high-flying style and resilience, reportedly suffered multiple rib fractures earlier this year, forcing medical officials to deny him clearance to compete.

Mysterio had been scheduled to face the dominant Gunther in a classic underdog-versus-powerhouse storyline. The matchup had generated significant excitement among fans eager to see whether experience and agility could overcome sheer strength. In response to the setback, WWE has named Seth Rollins as the replacement. The shift transforms the bout into a high-caliber contest between two elite performers known for their intensity and technical ability.

Gunther, who has built a reputation as one of WWE's most imposing competitors, now faces a very different challenge. Rollins brings speed, unpredictability, and a relentless drive to reclaim top status, setting the stage for a compelling encounter.

Although Mysterio's absence is disappointing, the revised clash promises a thrilling spectacle, proving once again how quickly fortunes can change in professional wrestling.

Real Madrid bank on European magic to tame Bayern challenge

MADRID

Real Madrid will look to summon their famed European resilience when they face Bayern Munich in a blockbuster UEFA Champions League quarter-final clash on Tuesday.

The meeting marks the 29th encounter between the two giants in the competition, the most between any two clubs, adding another chapter to one of football's fiercest rivalries. While Madrid boast a record 15 titles, Bayern arrive as one of Europe's most in-form sides this season. Despite a turbulent domestic campaign, Madrid once again showed their pedigree by eliminating Manchester City in the previous round. Their ability to deliver in high-pressure situations has kept their Champions League hopes alive even when consistency has eluded them elsewhere. Coach Alvaro Arbeloa faces the challenge of balancing a star-studded squad featuring Kylian Mbappe, Vinicius Junior and Jude Bellingham. The trio's attacking prowess will be crucial against a Bayern side known for its aggressive pressing and clinical finishing.

Bayern, under Vincent Kompany, have been in formidable form, going unbeaten in recent months. The likely return of Harry Kane, who has scored prolifically this season, further strengthens their attacking threat alongside dynamic forwards.

Midfielder Joshua Kimmich expressed confidence in Kane's availability, underlining the striker's importance to Bayern's ambitions. The German side's blend of physicality, pace and tactical discipline makes them slight favourites heading into the tie.

However, Madrid will draw confidence from their remarkable history at the Santiago Bernabeu, where they have repeatedly produced dramatic comebacks against top opposition. The influence of the home crowd and the club's deep-rooted Champions League pedigree remain intangible advantages.

Bayern officials have acknowledged the challenge posed by Madrid's aura in Europe, noting that handling the pressure at the Bernabeu requires exceptional composure and mental strength. With both teams chasing continental glory, the clash promises to be a high-stakes encounter where form meets history, and where Madrid will hope their enduring Champions League magic prevails once again.

Spaun rallies late to clinch Texas Open title in dramatic finish

SAN ANTONIO

J. J. Spaun produced a stunning late surge to win the Texas Open, securing his first title since last year's U.S. Open with a one-shot victory in challenging conditions.

The 35-year-old carded a five-under 67, finishing at 17-under 271 to edge out a tightly packed field. Spaun's triumph was built on two crucial moments late in the round — a precise tee shot on the 16th for birdie and a brilliant drive on the 17th that set up an eagle opportunity, ultimately sealing the win.

It marked his second career victory at the Texas Open, though this triumph carried added significance after a modest start to the season. Spaun had not recorded a top-20 finish in his previous seven outings, making the win a timely boost ahead of the upcoming Masters.

"I've just tried to stay patient and trust the process," Spaun said, reflecting on the pressures following his major success last year.

Scotland's Robert MacIntyre, who had led for much of the tournament, mounted a late challenge but fell short after a costly error on the final hole. He finished tied for second alongside Matt Wallace and Michael Kim.

Cousins surpasses Brady in earnings after blockbuster Raiders deal

LAS VEGAS

Veteran quarterback Kirk Cousins has climbed to third place on the NFL's all-time career earnings list, overtaking legendary Tom Brady following a lucrative new contract with the Las Vegas Raiders.

Cousins, 37, has now earned over $341 million across his 14-year career, surpassing Brady's approximate $333 million despite the latter's record-breaking 23-season run that included seven Super Bowl titles. The milestone highlights the rapid rise in player salaries in the National Football League over the past decade.

The latest surge in Cousins' earnings comes after he signed a five-year deal reportedly worth $172 million with the Raiders. However, the contract structure is heavily back-loaded, with a guaranteed $20 million for the 2026 season and additional bonuses lined up in subsequent years.

Cousins now trails only Matthew Stafford and Aaron Rodgers on the all-time earnings list, both of whom have benefited from high-value contracts in recent seasons.

The Raiders' decision to bring in Cousins is seen as a strategic move aimed at adding experience and stability to the roster. Despite holding the top pick in the 2026 NFL Draft, the franchise appears keen to avoid rushing a young quarterback into the spotlight.

Reports suggest that highly rated prospect Fernando Mendoza could still be part of the team's long-term plans, with Cousins expected to play a mentoring role while continuing as a starting option in the short term. His extensive experience across multiple franchises is viewed as a valuable asset in guiding emerging talent.

While Cousins' recent on-field performances have shown signs of decline, his consistency and leadership qualities remain respected across the league. The Raiders believe his presence can help bridge the gap between rebuilding and competitiveness.

The financial milestone also reignites debate over legacy versus earnings, as Cousins surpasses one of the sport's greatest icons without matching his championship success, underscoring the evolving economics of professional football.

UCLA rout South Carolina to win maiden NCAA women's title

PHOENIX

UCLA Bruins women's basketball capped a historic season by clinching their first-ever NCAA Women's Basketball Championship title with a dominant 79-51 victory over South Carolina Gamecocks women's basketball.

Led by standout performances from Gabriela Jaquez and Lauren Betts, the Bruins delivered a commanding display on both ends of the court to complete their redemption arc after last year's Final Four disappointment.

Jaquez starred with 21 points, along with 10 rebounds and five assists, while Betts contributed 16 points and 11 rebounds, anchoring a suffocating defensive effort. The Bruins, who finished the season with a remarkable 37-1 record, controlled the game from the outset and never allowed South Carolina to settle.

UCLA's aggressive start set the tone, racing to a double-digit lead in the opening quarter as South Carolina struggled with poor shooting. The Bruins extended their advantage before halftime through disciplined defence and efficient scoring inside the paint.

The game was effectively decided in the third quarter when UCLA unleashed a decisive scoring run, stretching their lead beyond reach. Their defensive intensity restricted the Gamecocks to one of their lowest-scoring performances of the season.

Woods faces retirement calls as Masters begins amid personal turmoil

AUGUSTA

As the Masters Tournament 2026 gets underway at Augusta National, the spotlight has shifted away from the course to the uncertain future of Tiger Woods, with growing calls from those close to him urging the legendary golfer to consider retirement.

The 15-time major champion is absent from this year's Masters following a recent DUI-related arrest and a rollover car crash in Florida on March 27. The incident has forced Woods to step away from the game temporarily as he undergoes treatment, reportedly at an overseas facility, prioritising his health and recovery.

Despite the setback, Woods had expressed a strong desire to compete at Augusta, a venue where he has produced some of the most iconic moments in golf history. However, concerns over his physical and mental well-being have intensified, with friends and associates reportedly advising him to shift focus away from competitive golf.

Sources close to the golfer suggest that Woods remains determined to return to the top, often reflecting on his peak years and believing he can regain that level. This mindset, while reflective of his competitive spirit, has raised concerns among his inner circle, who fear he may be struggling to accept the changing realities of his career.

Adding another dimension to the situation is the attention surrounding his relationship with Vanessa Trump. Reports indicate that some within Woods' circle are worried that his personal life is not helping him recalibrate his priorities during this critical phase.

Woods himself acknowledged the seriousness of his situation, stating that he is stepping away from golf for a period to focus on his health. His candid remarks underline the challenges he faces as he balances recovery with his enduring passion for the sport.

Just days before the accident, Woods had reiterated his desire to play at the Masters, highlighting his deep connection to the tournament.

Iran seeks World Cup venue shift, awaits FIFA response on security

TEHRAN

Iran has reiterated its request to FIFA to relocate its fixtures in the FIFA World Cup 2026 from the United States to Mexico, citing security concerns, even as it awaits an official response from the global governing body.

Iran, which has qualified for the expanded 48-team tournament, is currently scheduled to play its group-stage matches in Los Angeles and Seattle. However, Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali said the request to shift venues remains active and is crucial for ensuring the team's participation.

Donyamali stated that Iran's involvement in the World Cup would depend on receiving adequate security guarantees. He emphasised that while preparations are ongoing, the final decision on participation would rest with the government based on the assurances provided.

The minister also criticised remarks made by Donald Trump regarding the safety of the Iranian team in the United States, describing them as inconsistent. He stressed that under FIFA regulations, host nations must ensure the safety of all participating teams.

"If such guarantees are not provided, the possibility of Iran playing its matches in the US is very low," Donyamali said, adding that relocating games to Mexico could offer a viable solution. The 2026 World Cup will be jointly hosted by the United States, Mexico and Canada from June 11 to July 19. Beyond logistical concerns, the minister also pointed to broader geopolitical tensions, suggesting that international sporting bodies should uphold fairness and consistency in their decisions. He highlighted what he described as double standards in global sports governance, calling for greater adherence to the principles of fair play.

Despite the uncertainty, Iranian players continue their preparations for the tournament. The team remains focused on competing at the highest level, provided the necessary conditions are met.

With time running out before the tournament, all eyes are now on FIFA's response, which will ultimately determine whether Iran's request is accepted and how the situation unfolds.

QUICK READ

Edible oils and essentials boost FMCG sector growth

NEW DELHI

The FMCG sector in India is showing signs of gradual recovery, driven primarily by strong demand for edible oils and other essential products, according to a recent industry report. Consumers continue to prioritize staples and everyday necessities, which has helped maintain steady revenue growth for companies despite broader economic pressures. While discretionary spending remains cautious, the consistent performance of essential goods is supporting overall sector stability. Analysts note that targeted marketing, supply chain efficiency, and product availability will be key factors in sustaining growth momentum, as the FMCG industry gradually navigates post-pandemic market challenges.

PhonePe SBI card launches with zero joining fee

BENGALURU

PhonePe and SBI Card have launched a co-branded credit card that comes with zero joining fee and offers 5% rewards on all online spends. The card aims to attract digital-first consumers who frequently shop online, providing cashback and reward points across e-commerce platforms, bill payments, and other digital transactions.

Users can manage payments, track rewards, and redeem benefits seamlessly through the PhonePe app, enhancing convenience and financial control. The card also features standard security measures, contactless payments, and EMI options, making it suitable for a wide range of online purchases. With this launch, PhonePe and SBI Card aim to strengthen their presence in India's growing digital credit ecosystem.

India steps up efforts to secure fertiliser supplies

NEW DELHI

India is intensifying efforts to secure fertiliser supplies ahead of the key sowing season, amid global supply disruptions. The government has floated international tenders to import urea and other essential fertilisers, aiming to ensure stable availability for farmers. Domestic production has been constrained due to limited liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply, a critical input for urea manufacturing. Authorities are increasing gas allocations to fertiliser plants to boost output. Additionally, India is exploring multiple international partners to diversify imports and reduce dependency on a single region. These measures aim to prevent shortages, stabilize prices, and support agricultural productivity.

States likely to raise up to Rs 14 lakh cr in FY27: ICRA

ICRA Limited projects Indian states' borrowings to rise modestly to Rs 13.4–14 lakh crore in FY27, reflecting steady fiscal expansion.

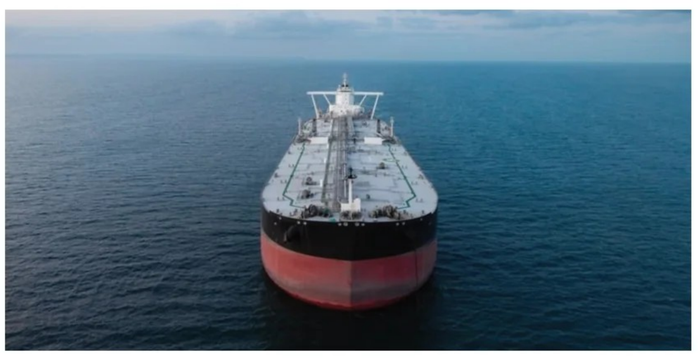
NEW DELHI

ICRA has projected that Indian state governments are likely to raise between ₹13.4 lakh crore and ₹14 lakh crore in FY27, marking a year-on-year increase of about 5 to 9%.

This anticipated rise in borrowings reflects growing fiscal requirements as states continue to invest in infrastructure, social welfare programs, and economic development initiatives.

The increase in borrowing is expected to be driven by higher capital expenditure, particularly in sectors such as roads, power, irrigation, and urban development. States are focusing on improving infrastructure to support long-term growth, which requires substantial financial resources. At the same time, revenue generation remains a challenge for many states, prompting a greater reliance on market borrowings.Despite the rise, the growth in borrowing is considered moderate compared to previous years, suggesting a cautious approach toward fiscal management. States are likely to balance their development needs with concerns about debt sustainability and fiscal deficits. Efforts to improve tax collections and enhance efficiency in public spending may also help reduce excessive dependence on borrowing over time.The broader macroeconomic environment, including interest rates and inflation trends, will play a crucial role in shaping borrowing strategies. Higher interest rates could increase the cost of borrowing, thereby impacting state finances. Conversely, stable economic conditions

may provide some relief and support planned expenditures. Overall, the projected borrowing levels highlight the continued importance of prudent fiscal planning as states aim to sustain growth while maintaining financial stability.



Oil could hit $130–140 if West Asia conflict drags on

Any prolonged conflict could constrain production and exports, tightening global supply and driving prices upward

MUMBAI

Crude oil prices may surge to $130–$140 per barrel if the ongoing conflict in West Asia persists, according to analysts at Kotak Securities.

The geopolitical tension in key oil-producing regions has heightened concerns over supply disruptions, which could significantly impact global energy markets.

The Middle East, particularly the Gulf region, plays a crucial role in global oil supply. Any prolonged conflict could constrain production and exports, tightening global supply and driving prices upward. Higher crude prices would not only affect energy-importing countries like India but could also trigger inflationary pressures worldwide.India, heavily reliant on oil imports, would face increased import bills, potentially widening its current account deficit and raising fuel costs for consumers.

Industries dependent on petroleum products, including transportation, chemicals, and manufacturing, would also experience higher operational costs, potentially affecting economic growth.

Kotak Securities has emphasized that sustained geopolitical instability in West Asia could exacerbate volatility in oil prices.

Investors and policymakers are advised to monitor developments closely, as market reactions could be swift and significant. Strategic reserves, alternative supply sources, and energy efficiency measures may help mitigate some risks, but uncertainty remains high.

The report also highlights that even a temporary disruption in oil shipments through critical channels such as the Strait of Hormuz could lead to immediate spikes in crude prices. Analysts caution that markets could react sharply to any escalation, emphasizing the importance of global coordination and crisis management.

In summary, prolonged West Asia conflicts could push crude oil to unprecedented levels, impacting global energy prices, inflation, and economic stability, particularly for countries heavily dependent on oil imports. Strategic planning and risk mitigation will be essential to navigate potential challenges.

Telecom sector outlook positive, ARPU-tariffs to drive performance

NEW DELHI

India's telecom sector is expected to maintain a positive outlook, supported by steady growth in average revenue per user (ARPU) and anticipated tariff hikes.Rising data consumption, increasing smartphone penetration, and expanding digital services are contributing to improved revenue streams for telecom operators across the country.Higher ARPU remains a key driver of financial performance. Telecom companies are focusing on increasing per-user revenue through premium data plans, bundled services, and value-added offerings. As users consume more data for streaming, gaming, and digital transactions, operators are better positioned to enhance their earnings without necessarily expanding their subscriber base significantly.Tariff hikes

are also likely to play a crucial role in boosting sector profitability. With intense competition gradually stabilizing, telecom providers are expected to revise pricing structures to improve margins. These increases are seen as necessary to offset rising operational costs, including spectrum charges, network maintenance, and infrastructure investments. Major players such as Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, and Vodafone Idea are expected to benefit from these trends. Their focus on expanding 4G and 5G networks, improving service quality, and enhancing customer experience will further support growth.Additionally, ongoing investments in 5G infrastructure are expected to unlock new revenue opportunities in areas such as enterprise solutions.

Bonanza Enterprises eyes strong profit growth

NEW DELHI

Bonanza Enterprises has reported an impressive profit growth of over 27 percent, signaling strong operational performance and strategic expansion in India's rapidly evolving logistics sector. The company's growth reflects rising demand for efficient supply chain solutions, driven by e-commerce expansion, infrastructure development, and increasing industrial activity across the country.The firm has focused on optimizing its operations through technology adoption, improved route planning, and enhanced warehousing capabilities. These initiatives have helped reduce costs while improving delivery efficiency.

INDIA FY27 GROWTH SLOWS AMID ENERGY SUPPLY DISRUPTIONS

NEW DELHI

India's GDP growth forecast for FY27 has been revised downward to around 6.8–6.9 percent, reflecting concerns over energy supply disruptions and global uncertainties.

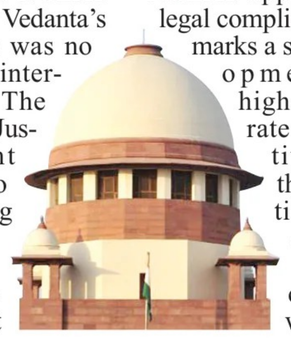
The downgrade highlights how external factors, especially those linked to energy markets, can significantly influence domestic economic performance. Disruptions in the supply of key fuels such as liquefied natural gas and crude oil have raised input costs for industries, thereby affecting production levels and overall economic activity.Higher energy prices tend to create inflationary pressures, as transportation and manufacturing costs increase. This, in turn, reduces consumer purchasing power and slows demand across sectors. Industries that are heavily dependent on energy, including manufacturing, fertilizers, and metals, are particularly vulnerable to such fluctuations. As production slows, it can have a cascading effect on employment and investment, further moderating growth.Geopolitical tensions, especially in energy-exporting regions, have also added to the uncertainty.

Trade routes and supply chains face potential disruptions, which can impact both imports and exports. Since India relies significantly on energy imports, any instability in global markets directly affects its economic outlook.Despite the downgrade, the projected growth rate still places.

SC denies interim relief to Vedanta in insolvency dispute

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court of India on Monday refused to grant interim relief to Vedanta Ltd in its legal challenge against the resolution plan of Adani Enterprises Ltd for the insolvent Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL). The top court declined to stay or halt the implementation of the resolution plan approved for Adani, reinforcing lower tribunal decisions and indicating that Vedanta's appeal will be dealt with by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT). Vedanta approached the Supreme Court after both the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and the NCLAT refused to provide interim relief by staying the resolution process in favour of Adani. The dispute stems from Vedanta's contention that its own bid for JAL—claimed to be of higher value—was not properly considered during the insolvency proceedings, raising questions over the transparency and fairness of the process. The company argued that the Committee of Creditors (CoC) erred in selecting Adani's plan despite Vedanta's revised offer being financially superior. In refusing relief, the Supreme Court observed that since the NCLAT is scheduled to hear Vedanta's appeal soon, there was no legal necessity to interfere at this stage. The bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant urged the NCLAT to expedite the hearing and directed all parties to present their contentions before it. The court also noted that any major policy decisions by the resolution professional or monitoring committee in the interim should be taken only after NCLAT approval to ensure legal compliance. This ruling marks a significant development in the high-profile corporate dispute, effectively allowing the Adani resolution plan to proceed without immediate judicial hindrance while leaving.



Nifty Sensex rebound driven by banks realty midcaps

MUMBAI

Indian equity markets witnessed a strong rebound as both the Nifty 50 and Sensex closed with notable gains, fueled by heavy buying in banking, real estate, and midcap stocks. Investor sentiment improved following positive cues from domestic economic indicators and stable global markets, which encouraged renewed buying interest across key sectors.The banking sector led the rally, with major private and public banks recording robust gains. Analysts attribute this to expectations of improved credit growth, healthy asset quality, and strong quarterly earnings from several lenders. Financial stocks often act as a market bellwether, and their recovery helped lift broader indices.Realty stocks also contributed significantly to the upswing. With renewed investor confidence and government initiatives to support housing and infrastructure development, real estate companies witnessed strong trading volumes and price appreciation. Midcap stocks, often sensitive to market sentiment, experienced substantial inflows as investors sought growth opportunities beyond large-cap segments.Market experts noted that global cues, including stable crude oil prices and easing geopolitical tensions, provided additional support to domestic equities. Furthermore, sector-specific developments, such as policy announcements and corporate earnings updates, reinforced investor optimism.Trading volumes were healthy, indicating strong participation from both retail and institutional investors. The rebound underscores the resilience of the Indian stock market and its ability to recover from short-term corrections.In conclusion, the positive movement in Nifty and Sensex reflects a combination of sectoral strength, macroeconomic stability, and investor confidence. Analysts suggest that sustained gains will depend on continued corporate performance, policy clarity, and global market trends, keeping the focus on banking, realty, and midcap segments as key drivers of market momentum.

STRENGTHENING ROLE OF BOARDS

Boardroom engagement central to corporate governance reforms

Mumbai

SEBI Chairman emphasized that boardroom engagement will be central to the next phase of corporate governance reforms in India.

Strengthening the role of boards is seen as essential to improving transparency, accountability, and sustainable business practices across listed companies.

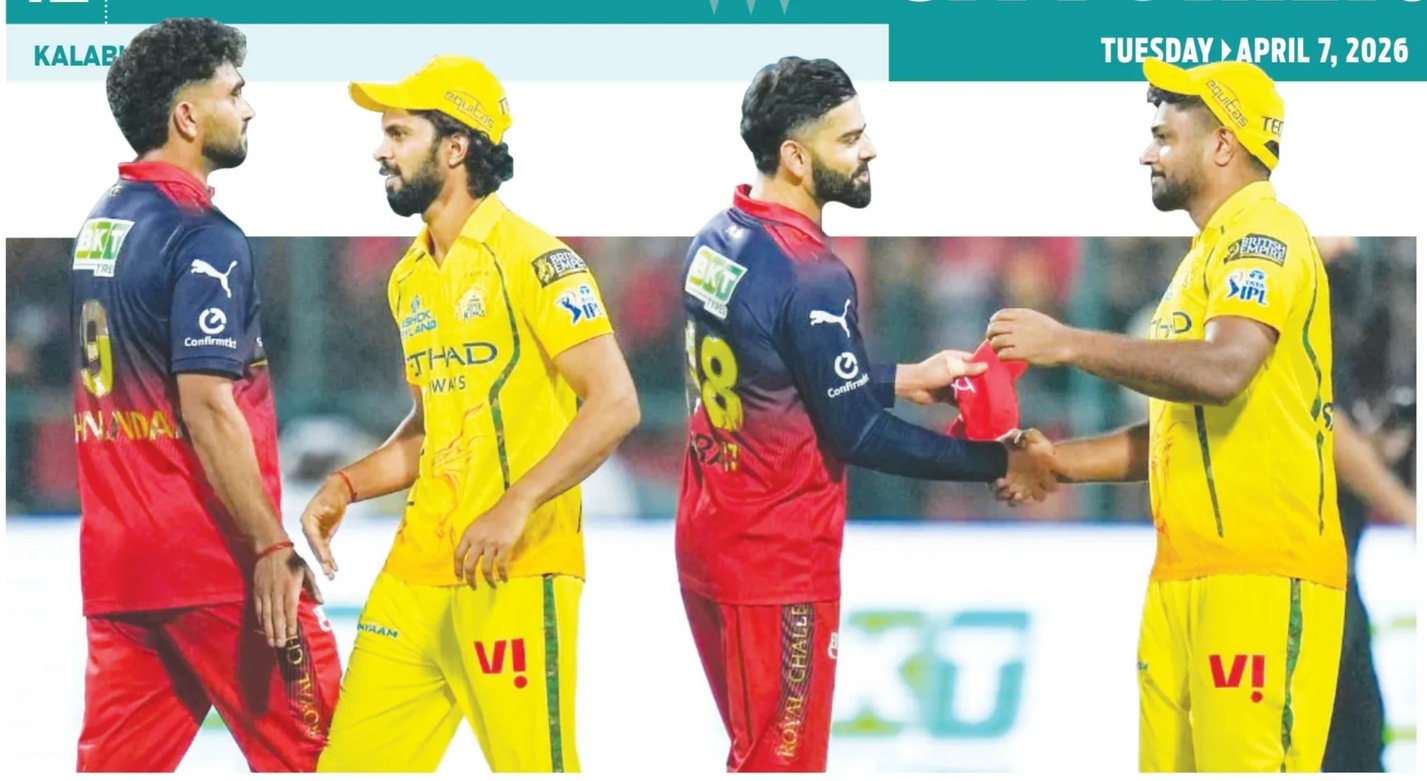
According to the SEBI Chairman, active participation of board members in strategic decision-making and oversight is vital to ensuring that governance reforms translate into meaningful outcomes. This includes enhancing risk management, ethical conduct, and compliance with regulatory frameworks. Boards are expected to move beyond routine compliance checks and engage deeply with business strategy, sustainability, and stakeholder concerns.

Recent reforms have focused on disclosure norms, independent director responsibilities, and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) reporting. The next phase aims to ensure these measures are effectively implemented through proactive board involvement rather than mere procedural adherence. By fostering a culture of accountability at the board level, SEBI seeks to improve investor confidence and overall market integrity.

The Chairman also highlighted the importance of board diversity, skill development, and continuous learning to handle complex corporate challenges. Technology adoption, including data-driven

governance tools, is expected to support boards in monitoring performance and mitigating risks effectively. SEBI's approach underscores that good governance is not only about regulatory compliance but also about embedding ethical and strategic thinking into corporate decision-making. Active board engagement will therefore be a cornerstone of reform, driving transparency, efficiency, and long-term value creation for shareholders and stakeholders alike.

This focus signals a shift toward more robust, proactive, and accountable corporate governance in India's evolving market landscape.



Work ethic key as 'ASHWIN' backs young CSK amid slump

NEW DELHI

Indian spin veteran Ravichandran Ashwin has urged Chennai Super Kings to focus on building a strong work ethic and positive dressing-room environment as the team grapples with a difficult start to the Indian Premier League 2026 season.

CSK slumped to their third consecutive defeat after a crushing 43-run loss to Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Sunday, leaving them at the bottom of the points table. The loss has intensified concerns over the team's form and morale, especially with a relatively young and inexperienced squad.

Struggling CSK urged to build strong culture and patience amid tough phase

Speaking on JioHotstar, Ashwin acknowledged the emotional toll such defeats can have on a team. He noted that the dressing room would be "hurting" but stressed that harsh criticism would not help a side still finding its feet. Instead, he emphasised the importance of cultivating discipline, unity, and a healthy team culture as the pathway to improvement.

Ashwin also pointed out that it would be unfair to demand accountability from inexperienced players, who are still developing their game at the highest level. According to him, young cricketers should be allowed to enjoy their cricket without the burden of living up to the legacy associated with a franchise like CSK.

The match saw a dominant batting display from RCB, powered by Tim David, who smashed a blistering 70 off just 25 balls to propel his side to an imposing total. CSK's inability to contain the onslaught further exposed gaps in both bowling and execution.

Former South African captain Faf du Plessis, who joined the discussion, backed CSK's batting unit to bounce back. He expressed confidence in skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad and players like Sanju Samson, asserting that their proven quality would eventually come through.

Du Plessis added that the current adversity could prove valuable for Gaikwad's growth as a leader, noting that challenging phases often shape resilient and effective captains.

SAMSON finding his feet at CSK, desperate to deliver: Fleming

BENGALURU

Coach backs struggling Samson, urges patience as CSK rebuilds team balance.

Sanju Samson is still adjusting to life at Chennai Super Kings and remains eager to make a meaningful impact despite a slow start to the Indian Premier League 2026, head coach Stephen Fleming said on Monday.

Samson, who made a high-profile move from Rajasthan Royals ahead of the season, has struggled in his first three outings, scoring 6, 7 and 9. His modest returns at the top have denied CSK strong starts, adding pressure on the middle order.

Fleming, however, downplayed concerns over the wicketkeeper-batter's form, stressing that adapting to a new franchise takes time. He said Samson is "going through the process of connecting" with the team environment, pointing out that building a sense of belonging is as important as performance on the field.

Despite the early setbacks, the coach emphasised that Samson is highly motivated to succeed. Drawing from his past performances, including his impactful international outings, Fleming expressed confidence that the Kerala batter would soon find his rhythm and become a key contributor. CSK's campaign has also been affected by frequent changes in the playing XI, with five to six adjustments disrupting stability. Fleming noted that efforts are underway off the field to strengthen team bonding and create a cohesive unit capable of handling pressure situations.

The coach also called for patience with emerging talents such as Ayush Mhatre, highlighting the balance between nurturing potential and accepting inconsistency. He believes the young core will play a vital role in shaping CSK's future.

Reflecting on the recent defeat to Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Fleming identified the late onslaught by Tim David as the turning point. He added that lapses in execution during the death overs allowed the opposition to post an imposing total, which ultimately proved decisive.

While results have not gone CSK's way, Fleming maintained that sustained support and patience would help the team rediscover its winning touch.

NIRVIKA shines at Augusta, wins Drive, Chip and Putt title

AUGUSTA

Fourteen-year-old Nirvika Koduru, a US teenager of Indian origin, delivered a sensational performance to win the Drive, Chip and Putt National Finals in the girls' 14-15 category at Augusta National Golf Club.

Nirvika, whose family hails from Nellore in Andhra Pradesh, showcased remarkable composure under pressure to top the field in record fashion. After finishing second in driving and third in chipping, she produced a clutch display in putting, sinking a 30-foot putt on the iconic 18th green to seal victory. Her total of 30 points matched the all-time record across categories, while her 7.5-point winning margin was the biggest among all winners this year. With this triumph, she became the first American of Indian origin to win the prestigious title.

"I just tried to stay calm and focus on consistency," said Nirvika, who began playing golf at the age of five.

Her achievement highlights the growing presence of players of Indian origin in global golf, joining the likes of Sahith Theegala and Akshay Bhatia.

Padikkal credits mindset shift for white-ball success with RCB

BENGALURU

Devdutt Padikkal has credited a conscious shift in mindset and technique for his growing success in white-ball formats, saying it was not easy to "change the foundation" of his batting but the effort is now paying off in the Indian Premier League 2026.

The Royal Challengers Bengaluru batter has been in impressive form, following up his 61 against Sunrisers Hyderabad with a fluent half-century against Chennai Super Kings, helping his side secure a convincing win.

Speaking after the match, Padikkal said adapting to the demands of white-ball cricket required him to step out of his comfort zone and rethink his approach.

He admitted that altering a batting style developed over years was challenging, but sustained hard work and self-belief enabled the transition.

Padikkal also acknowledged the role of the RCB support staff in guiding him through the process, helping him refine his technique and expand his scoring options.

The left-hander emphasised that modern T20 cricket demands versatility, with batters constantly working to improve their range-hitting abilities.

Kerala Blasters face fan backlash as Manjappada announces home boycott

KOCHI

Kerala Blasters FC have suffered a major setback off the field in the Indian Super League 2026, with their largest supporters' group Manjappada announcing a boycott of all home matches following the team's poor run of form.

The decision comes amid a dismal campaign that has seen the Blasters lose six of their seven matches so far, leaving them near the bottom of the standings in the 14-team league. The mounting frustration among fans has now culminated in a strong and public protest against the club's management.

Manjappada, regarded as one of Asia's biggest football fan groups, commands a massive social media presence, with over a million followers across platforms. Known for their vibrant presence at the Jawaharlal Nehru International Stadium in Kochi, their absence is expected to significantly impact the matchday atmosphere.

In a strongly worded statement, the group declared that their boycott is a united stand against what they described as an "unacceptable" situation at the club. They emphasised that continued support without accountability would only enable the ongoing decline, adding that their passion and voices have been ignored for too long.

The irony of the situation was evident as the boycott announcement came just days after Manjappada passionately supported the Indian national team during an AFC Asian Cup qualifier at the same venue.

Their withdrawal from ISL matches, therefore, signals dissatisfaction specifically with the club rather than the sport itself.

On the field, matters continue to worsen for the Blasters. Their first game following the boycott announcement ended in a 0-2 defeat to SC Delhi, further deepening concerns over the team's performance and morale.

With three crucial home fixtures remaining, the absence of Manjappada's iconic tifos and chants at Kochi could further dent the team's confidence. The supporters' group has made it clear that their return hinges on concrete actions from the management, demanding transparency and meaningful change.

So far, the club management has not issued an official response, leaving the situation unresolved as pressure continues to mount.

SATWIK-CHIRAG WITHDRAW; Lakshya, Sindhu lead India's title push

NINGBO

India's campaign at the Badminton Asia Championships 2026 has suffered a setback with the withdrawal of star doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, even as Lakshya Sen and P. V. Sindhu gear up to spearhead the country's challenge in singles. The former champions, who clinched the title in 2023, opted out of the tournament after Satwik continued to struggle with a shoulder injury. The duo had earlier withdrawn from the Swiss Open as well, raising concerns over their fitness ahead of a packed international season. With the absence of India's top doubles combination, the focus now shifts to the singles contingent, which will be aiming to end a decades-long drought at the continental meet. India has not produced a men's singles champion since Dinesh Khanna won gold in 1965, and Lakshya will be eager to rewrite history following his recent runner-up finish at the All England Championships. Lakshya begins his campaign against Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu, while compatriots H. S. Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth also feature in a competitive men's singles draw.

India eye Billie Jean King Cup play-offs amid Shrivalli setback

NEW DELHI

India will aim to capitalise on home conditions as they begin their campaign in the Billie Jean King Cup Asia-Oceania Group I ties, with a coveted play-offs berth in sight, despite a late setback caused by the withdrawal of Shrivalli Bhamidipaty.

The tournament, being held at the DLTA Complex, marks India's return to the regional competition after a disappointing outing in the 2025 play-offs in Bengaluru, where they finished third in their group. This time, the hosts face stiff competition from teams such as Indonesia, Korea, New Zealand, Thailand and Mongolia, with only the top two sides progressing and the bottom two facing relegation. India's preparations suffered a blow after Shrivalli, who had been a key performer in previous campaigns, pulled out due to a back spasm. Team captain Vishal Uppal confirmed that Zeel Desai would replace her after reserve player Vaidehee Chaudhari was ruled out with an ankle injury.

The responsibility in singles will now largely rest on Sahaja Yamalapalli and Vaishnavi Adkar, both of whom have shown promise on the international circuit. Sahaja has been consistent on the ITF tour and gained valuable exposure at the WTA level, while Vaishnavi's recent rise, including a strong run in a W100 event, has boosted India's depth.

Experienced campaigner Ankita Raina is expected to anchor the doubles alongside Rutuja Bhosale, forming a crucial combination that could prove decisive in tight contests. Indonesia, led by top-ranked Janice Tjen, start as favourites, while Korea and New Zealand also present strong line-ups. Thailand's balanced squad adds to the competitive field, making the race for the top two spots intense. Despite the absence of a top-200 singles player, India will rely on home advantage and team cohesion to bridge the gap. A disciplined showing in singles and consistency in doubles could pave the way for a return to the play-offs.

VAISHALI CLIMBS TO SECOND AS TAN BLUNDER PROVES COSTLY IN CANDIDATES

PEGEIA

India's R. Vaishali continued her impressive run in the FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026, capitalising on a crucial error by former world champion Tan Zhongyi to secure her second consecutive win in the women's section. Tan's costly blunder led to the loss of a piece, and Vaishali showed composure and precision to convert her advantage into a full point. The victory lifted her to second place with four points after seven rounds, just half a point behind leader Anna Muzychuk, who played out a draw against Bibisara Assaubayeva. Meanwhile, fellow Indian Divya Deshmukh had to settle for a draw against Russia's Kateryna Lagno despite holding a promising position. The marathon encounter stretched to 135 moves before the players agreed to split the point, leaving Divya tied in the mid-table. In the open section, Anish Giri halted the winning streak of Uzbekistan's Javokhir Sindarov, forcing the young leader into a draw. Sindarov, who had won his previous four games, remained at the top of the standings with six points, maintaining a comfortable lead.

Second seed Fabiano Caruana was also held to a draw by India's R. Praggnanandhaa, who delivered a solid performance to neutralise the higher-ranked opponent.

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